

THE
ROMANCE OF THE FOREST:

INTERSPERSED WITH
SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

“ Ere the bat hath flown
“ His cloister'd flight ; ere to black Hecate's summons,
“ The shard-born beetle, with his drowsy hums,
“ Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
“ A deed of dreadful note.”

MACBETH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.
THE FOURTH EDITION.

BY ANN RADCLIFFE,

AUTHOR OF

“ A SICILIAN ROMANCE,” &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. HOOKHAM AND J. CARPENTER,
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M,DCC,XCIV.

NOT RECORDED WITH

SOME PIECES OF LORE.

"A dead of darkness now."
 "Light, long night's journey past, there shall be done."
 "The shadowed beetle, with his dusky hums."
 "His elated flight, one to black Heaven's funnels,"
 "The shadowed beetle now."

MAILED

IT is proper to mention that some of the little Poems inserted in the following Pages have appeared, by permission of the Author, in the GAZETTEER.



W. A. SICILLIAN ROMANOV, N. 100

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. HOOKHAM AND J. CARRINGTON.

NEW AND OLD BOND STREET.

• 7125, 000, M

(vi) /

DEDICATION.

TO HER GRACE
THE
DUCHESS OF LEEDS.

MADAM,

I AM too grateful for the honour of being permitted to

VOL. I. a say

3

say that this work has Your GRACE's approbation, to misuse the opportunity now offered me of addressing you, by praise, which it would be presumption in me to offer, and which it is the privilege of Your GRACE's merits to disdain.

Rather let me rejoice that the attention given in the following pages, to the cause of morality,

(v)

morality, has induced you to
overlook the weakness of my
endeavours to support it.

I am

Your GRACE's

Obedient humble Servant,

ANN RADCLIFFE.

(4)

morning has visited you to

overlook the weakness of my

endeavour to support it

the day is over

and I am now

John O'Leary

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

Obelisk Street

THE
ROMANCE

OF THE
FOREST.

CHAPTER I.

"I am a man,
"So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
"That I would set my life on a chance,
"To mend it, or be rid on't."

KING JOHN.

"WHEN once fordid interest seizes
"on the heart, it freezes up the source of
"every warm and liberal feeling; it is an
"enemy alike to virtue and to taste—*this*
"it perverts, and *that* it annihilates. The

“time may come, my friend, when death
 “shall dissolve the sinews of Avarice, and
 “Justice be permitted to resume her
 “rights.”

Such were the words of the Advocate Nemours to Pierre de la Motte, as the latter stepped at midnight into the carriage which was to bear him far from Paris, from his creditors and the persecution of the laws. De la Motte thanked him for this last instance of his kindness, the assistance he had given him in escape, and, when the carriage drove away, uttered a sad adieu! The gloom of the hour, and the peculiar emergency of his circumstances, sunk him in silent reverie.

Whoever has read Guyot de Pitaval, the most faithful of those writers who record the proceedings in the Parliamentary Courts of Paris, during the seventeenth century, must surely remember the striking story of Pierre de la Motte, and the Marquis Philippe de Montalt:

let

let all such, therefore, be informed, that the person here introduced to their notice was that individual Pierre de la Motte.

As Madame de la Motte leaned from the coach window, and gave a last look to the walls of Paris—Paris, the scene of her former happiness, and the residence of many dear friends—the fortitude, which had till now supported her, yielded to the force of grief. “Farewell all!” sighed she, “this last look—and we are separated for ever!” Tears followed her words, and, sinking back, she resigned herself to the stillness of sorrow. The recollection of former times pressed heavily upon her heart: a few months before, and she was surrounded by friends, fortune, and consequence; now, she was deprived of all, a miserable exile from her native place, without home, without comfort—almost without hope. It was not the least of her afflictions that she had been obliged to quit Paris without bidding adieu to her only son, who was now

on duty with his regiment in Germany: and such had been the precipitancy of this removal, that had she even known where he was stationed, she had no time to inform him of it, or of the alteration in his father's circumstances.

Pierre de la Motte was a gentleman descended from an ancient house of France. He was a man whose passions often overcame his reason, and, for a time, silenced his conscience; but, though the image of virtue, which Nature had impressed upon his heart, was sometimes obscured by the passing influence of vice, it was never wholly obliterated. With strength of mind sufficient to have withstood temptation, he would have been a good man; as it was, he was always a weak, and sometimes a vicious member of society: yet his mind was active, and his imagination vivid, which, co-operating with the force of passion, often dazzled his judgment and subdued principle. Thus he was a man, infirm in
pur-

purpose and visionary in virtue, in a word, his conduct was suggested by feeling, rather than principle; and his virtue, such as it was, could not stand the pressure of occasion.

Early in life he had married Constance Valentia, a beautiful and elegant woman, attached to her family and beloved by them. Her birth was equal, her fortune superior to his; and their nuptials had been celebrated under the auspices of an approving and flattering world. Her heart was devoted to La Motte, and, for some time, she found in him an affectionate husband; but, allured by the gaieties of Paris, he was soon devoted to its luxuries, and in a few years his fortune and affection were equally lost in dissipation. A false pride had still operated against his interest, and withheld him from honourable retreat while it was yet in his power: the habits which he had acquired, enchained him to the scene of his former pleasure; and thus

he had continued an expensive stile of life till the means of prolonging it were exhausted. He at length awoke from this lethargy of security; but it was only to plunge into new error, and to attempt schemes for the reparation of his fortune, which served to sink him deeper in destruction. The consequence of a transaction, in which he thus engaged, now drove him, with the small wreck of his property, into dangerous and ignominious exile.

It was his design to pass into one of the Southern Provinces, and there seek, near the borders of the kingdom, an asylum in some obscure village. His family consisted of his wife, and two faithful domestics, a man and woman who followed the fortunes of their master.

The night was dark and tempestuous, and, at about the distance of three leagues from Paris, Peter who now acted as postillion, having drove for some time

over

over a wild heath where many ways crossed, stopped, and acquainted De la Motte with his perplexity. The sudden stopping of the carriage roused the latter from his reverie, and filled the whole party with the terror of pursuit; he was unable to supply the necessary direction, and the extreme darkness made it dangerous to proceed without one. During this period of distress, a light was perceived at some distance, and after much doubt and hesitation, La Motte, in the hope of obtaining assistance, alighted and advanced towards it; he proceeded slowly, from the fear of unknown pits. The light issued from the window of a small and ancient house, which stood alone on the heath, at the distance of half a mile.

Having reached the door, he stopped for some moments, listening in apprehensive anxiety—no sound was heard but that of the wind, which swept in hollow gusts over the waste. At length he ven-

tured to knock, and, having waited some time, during which he indistinctly heard several voices in conversation, some one within inquired what he wanted? La Motte answered, that he was a traveller who had lost his way, and desired to be directed to the nearest town.

“ That,” said the person, “ is seven
“ miles off, and the road bad enough,
“ even if you could see it; if you only
“ want a bed, you may have it here,
“ and had better stay.”

The “ pitiless pelting ” of the storm, which, at this time, beat with increasing fury upon La Motte, inclined him to give up to the attempt of proceeding farther till day-light; but, desirous of seeing the person with whom he conversed, before he ventured to expose his family by calling up the carriage, he asked to be admitted. The door was now opened by a tall figure with a light, who invited La Motte to enter. He followed the man through a passage into a room almost

most unfurnished, in one corner of which a bed was spread upon the floor. The forlorn and desolate aspect of his apartment made La Motte shriek involuntarily, and he was turning to go out when the man suddenly pushed him back, and he heard the door locked upon him: his heart failed, yet he made a desperate, though vain, effort to force the door, and called loudly for release. No answer was returned but he distinguished the voices of men in the room above, and, not doubting but their intention was to rob and murder him, his agitation, at first, nearly overcame his reason. By the light of almost some expiring embers, he perceived a window, but the hope which this discovery revived, was quickly lost, when he found the aperture guarded by strong iron bars. Such preparation of security surprised him, and confirmed his worst apprehensions.—Alone, unarmed—beyond the chance of assistance, he saw himself in the power

of people, whose trade was apparently rapine!—murder their means!—After revolving every possibility of escape, he endeavoured to await the event with fortitude; but La Motte could boast of no such virtue.

The voices had ceased, and all remained still for a quarter of an hour, when, between the pauses of the wind, he thought he distinguished the sobs and moaning of a female; he listened attentively and became confirmed in his conjecture; it was too evidently the accent of distress. At this conviction, the remains of his courage forsook him, and a terrible surmise darted, with the rapidity of lightning, cross his brain. It was probable that his carriage had been discovered by the people of the house, who, with a design of plunder, had secured his servant, and brought hither Madame de la Motte. He was the more inclined to believe this, by the stillness which had, for some time, reigned in the house, previous

vious to the sounds he now heard. Or it was possible that the inhabitants were not robbers, but persons to whom he had been betrayed by his friend or servant, and who were appointed to deliver him into the hands of justice. Yet he hardly dared to doubt the integrity of his friend, who had been entrusted with the secret of his flight and the plan of his rout, and had procured him the carriage in which he had escaped. "Such depravity," exclaimed La Motte, "cannot surely," "exist in human nature; much less in the heart of Nemours!"

This ejaculation was interrupted by a noise in the passage leading to the room: it approached—the door was unlocked—and the man who had admitted La Motte into the house entered, leading, or rather forcibly dragging along, a beautiful girl, who appeared to be about eighteen. Her features were bathed in tears, and she seemed to suffer the utmost distress. The man fastened the lock and put the key

key in his pocket. He then advanced to La Motte, who had before observed other persons in the passage, and pointing a pistol to his breast, "You are wholly in our power," said he, "no assistance can reach you: if you wish to save your life, swear that you will convey this girl where I may never see her more; or rather consent to take her with you, for your oath I would not believe, and I can take care you shall not find me again.— Answer quickly, you have no time to lose."

He now seized the trembling hand of the girl, who shrunk aghast with terror, and hurried her towards La Motte, whom surprize still kept silent. She sunk at his feet, and with supplicating eyes, that streamed with tears, implored him to have pity on her. Notwithstanding his present agitation, he found it impossible to contemplate the beauty and distress of the object before him with indifference.

difference. Her youth, her apparent innocence—the artless energy of her manner forcibly assailed his heart, and he was going to speak, when the ruffian, who mistook the silence of astonishment for that of hesitation, prevented him. “I have a horse ready to take you from hence,” said he, “and I will direct you over the heath. If you return within an hour you die; after then, you are at liberty to come here when you please.”

La Motte, without answering, raised the lovely girl from the floor, and was so much relieved from his own apprehensions, that he had leisure to attempt dissipating hers. “Let us be gone,” said the ruffian, “and have no more of this nonsense; you may think yourself well off it’s no worse. I’ll go and get the horse ready.”

The last words roused La Motte, and perplexed him with new fears; he dreaded to mention his carriage,
left

lest it might tempt the banditti to plunder; and to depart on horseback with this man might produce a consequence yet more to be dreaded. Madame La Motte, wearied with apprehension, would probably, send for her husband to the house, when all the former danger would be incurred, with the additional evil of being separated from his family, and the chance of being detected by the emissaries of justice in endeavouring to recover them. As these reflections passed over his mind in tumultuous rapidity, a noise was again heard in the passage, an uproar and scuffle ensued, and in the same moment he could distinguish the voice of his servant, who had been sent by Madame La Motte in search of him. Being now determined to disclose what could not long be concealed, he exclaimed aloud. that a horse was unnecessary, that he had a carriage at some distance which would convey them

them from the heath, and declared the man, who was seized, to be his servant.

The ruffian, speaking through the door, bid him be patient awhile, and he should hear more from him. La Motte now turned his eyes upon his unfortunate, companion, who, pale and exhausted, leaned for support against the wall. Her features, which were delicately beautiful, had gained from distress an expression of captivating sweetness: she had

“ An eye.

“ As when the blue sky trembles thro’ a cloud

“ Of purest white.”

A habit of grey camlet, with short flashed sleeves, shewed, but did not adorn, her figure; it was thrown open at the bosom, upon which part of her hair had fallen in disorder, while the light vail hastily thrown on, had, in her confusion, been suffered to fall back. Every moment of farther observation heightened the surprize of La Motte, and

inte-

interested him more warmly in her favour. Such elegance and apparent refinement, contrasted with the desolation of the house, and the savage manners of its inhabitants, seemed to him like a romance of imagination, rather than an occurrence, of real life. He endeavoured to comfort her, and his sense of compassion was too sincere to be misunderstood. Her terror gradually subsided into gratitude and grief. "Ah, Sir!" said she, "Heaven has sent you to my relief, and will surely reward you for your protection: I have no friend in the world, if I do not find one in you."

La Motte assured her of his kindness, when he was interrupted by the entrance of the ruffian. He desired to be conducted to his family. "All in good time," replied the latter; "I have taken care of one of them, and will of you, please St. Peter; so be comforted." These *comfortable* words renewed the terror of La Motte, who
 now

now earnestly begged to know if his family were safe. "O! as for that matter they are safe enough, and you will be with them presently; but don't stand *parlying* here all night. Do you chuse to go or stay? you know the conditions." They now bound the eyes of La Motte and of the young lady, whom terror had hitherto kept silent, and then placed them on two horses, a man mounted behind each, and they immediately galloped off. They had proceeded in this way near half an hour, when La Motte entreated to know whither he was going; "You will know that by and bye," said the ruffian, "so be at peace." Finding interrogatories useless, La Motte resumed silence till the horse stopped. His conductor then holloood, and being answered by voices at some distance, in a few moments the sound of carriage wheels was heard, and, soon after, the words of a man directing Peter which way

way to drive. As the carriage approached, La Motte called, and to his inexpressible joy, was answered by his wife.

“You are now beyond the borders
“of the heath, and may go which way
“you will,” said the ruffian; “if you
“return within an hour you will be
“welcomed by a brace of bullets.”

This was a very unnecessary caution to La Motte, whom they now released. The young stranger sighed deeply, as she entered the carriage; and the ruffians, having bestowed upon Peter some directions and more threats, waited to see him drive off. They did not wait long.

La Motte immediately gave a short relation of what had passed at the house, including an account of the manner in which the young stranger had been introduced to him. During this narrative, her deep convulsive sighs frequently drew the attention of Madame La Motte, whose compassion became gradually interested,

terested in her behalf, and who now
 endeavoured to tranquilize her spirits.
 The unhappy girl answered her kindness
 in artless and simple expressions, and then
 relapsed into tears and silence. Madame
 forbore for the present to ask any ques-
 tions that might lead to a discovery of
 her connections, or seem to require an
 explanation of the late adventure, which
 now furnishing her with a new subject of
 reflection, the sense of her own misfor-
 tunes pressed less heavily upon her mind.
 The distress even of La Motte was for a
 while suspended; he ruminated on the
 late scene, and it appeared like a vision
 or one of those extravagant fictions that
 sometimes are exhibited in romance:
 he could reduce it to no principle of
 probability, or render it comprehensible
 by any endeavour to analyze it. The
 present charge, and the chance of future
 trouble brought upon him by this adven-
 ture, occasioned some dissatisfaction;
 but the beauty and seeming innocence
 of

of Adeline, united with the pleadings of humanity in her favour, and he determined to protect her.

The tumult of emotions which had passed in the bosom of Adeline, began now to subside; terror was softened into anxiety, and despair into grief. The sympathy so evident in the manners of her companions, particularly in those of Madame La Motte, soothed her heart, and encouraged her to hope for better days.

Dismally and silently the night passed on; for the minds of the travellers were too much occupied by their several sufferings to admit of conversation. The dawn so anxiously, watched for, at length appeared, and introduced the strangers more fully to each others. Adeline derived comfort from the looks of Madame La Motte, who gazed frequently and attentively at her, and thought she had seldom seen a countenance so interesting, or a form so striking. The languor of
sorrow

sorrow threw a melancholy grace upon her features, that appealed immediately to the heart; and there was a penetrating sweetness in her blue eyes, which indicated an intelligent and amiable mind.

La Motte now looked anxiously from the coach window, that he might judge of his situation, and observe whether he was followed. The obscurity of the dawn confined his views, but no person appeared. The sun at length tinted the eastern clouds, and the tops of the highest hills, and soon after burst in full splendour on the scene. The terror of La Motte began to subside, and the griefs of Adeline to soften. They entered upon a lane confined by high banks, and over-arched by trees, on whose branches appeared the first green buds of spring glittering with dew. The fresh breeze of the morning animated the spirits of Adeline, whose mind was delicately sensible to the beauties of nature, and as she viewed the flowery luxuriance of the turf,

turf, and the tender green of the trees, or caught, between the opening banks, a glimpse of the varied landscape, rich with wood, and fading away in blue and distant mountains, her heart expanded in momentary joy. With Adeline the charms of external nature were heightened by those of novelty; she had seldom seen the grandeur of an extensive prospect, or the magnificence of a wide horizon—and not often the picturesque beauties of more confined scenery. Her mind had not lost, by long oppression, that elastic energy, which resists, calamity; else, however susceptible might have been her original taste, the beauties of nature would no longer have charmed her thus easily even to temporary repose.

The road, at length, wound down the side of a hill, and La Motte, again looking anxiously from the window, saw before him an open champaign country, through which the road, wholly unsheltered

tered from observation, extended almost in a direct line. The danger of these circumstances alarmed him, for his flight might, without difficulty, be traced for many leagues from the hills he was now descending. Of the first peasant that passed, he inquired for a road among the hills, but heard of none. La Motte now sunk into his former terrors. Madame, notwithstanding her own apprehensions, endeavoured to re-assure him, but, finding her efforts ineffectual, she also retired to the contemplation of her misfortunes. Often, as they went on, did La Motte look back upon the country they had passed, and often did imagination suggest to him the sounds of distant pursuit.

The travellers stopped to breakfast in a village, where the road was at length obscured by woods, and La Motte's spirits again revived. Adeline appeared more tranquil than she had yet been, and La Motte now asked for an explanation of

the scene he had witnessed on the preceding night. The inquiry renewed all her distress, and with tears she entreated for the present to be spared on the subject. La Motte pressed it no farther, but he observed that for the greater part of the day she seemed to remember it in melancholy and dejection. They now travelled among the hills, and were, therefore, in less danger of observation; but La Motte avoided the great towns, and stopped in obscure ones no longer than to refresh the horses. About two hours after noon, the road wound into a deep valley, watered by a rivulet, and overhung with wood. He now called to Peter, and ordered him to drive to a thickly-embowered spot, that appeared on the left. Here he alighted with his family, and Peter having spread the provisions on the turf, they seated themselves, and partook of a repast, which, in other circumstances, would have been thought delicious. Adeline endeavour-

ed to smile, but the langour of grief was now heightened by indisposition. The violent agitation of mind, and fatigue of body, which she had suffered for the last twenty-four hours, had overpowered her strength, and, when La Motte led her back to the carriage, her whole frame trembled with illness; but she uttered no complaint, and, having long observed the dejection of her companions, she made a feeble effort to enliven them.

They continued to travel during the day without any accident or interruption, and, about three hours after sunset, arrived at Monville, a small town, where La Motte determined to pass the night. Repose was, indeed, necessary to the whole party, whose pale and haggard looks, as they alighted from the carriage, were but too obvious to pass unobserved by the people of the inn. As soon as beds could be prepared, Adeline withdrew to her chamber accompanied by Madame La Motte, whose

concern for the fair stranger made her exert every effort to soothe and console her. Adeline wept in silence, and taking the hand of Madame, pressed it to her bosom. These were not merely tears of grief—they were mingled with those which flow from the grateful heart, when, unexpectedly, it meets with sympathy. Madame La Motte understood them. After some momentary silence, she renewed her assurances of kindness, and entreated Adeline to confide in her friendship; but she carefully avoided any mention of the subject, which had before so much affected her. Adeline, at length, found words to express her sense of this goodness, which she did in a manner so natural and sincere, that Madame, finding herself much affected, took leave of her for the night.

In the morning, La Motte rose at an early hour, impatient to be gone. Every thing was prepared for his departure, and the breakfast had been waiting some
time,

time, but Adeline did not appear. Madame La Motte went to her chamber, and found her sunk in a disturbed slumber. Her breathing was short and irregular—she frequently started, or sighed, and sometimes she muttered an incoherent sentence. While Madame gazed with concern upon her languid countenance, she awoke, and, looking up, gave her hand to Madame La Motte, who found it burning with fever. She had passed a restless night, and, as she now attempted to rise, her head, which beat with intense pain, became giddy, her strength failed, and she sunk back.

Madame was much alarmed, being at once convinced that it was impossible she could travel, and that a delay might prove fatal to her husband. She went to inform him of the truth, and his distress may be more easily imagined than described. He saw all the inconvenience and danger of delay, yet he could not so far divest himself of humanity, as to abandon

don Adeline to the care, or rather to the neglect of strangers. He sent immediately for a physician, who pronounced her to be in a high fever, and said, a removal in her present state must be fatal. La Motte now determined to wait the event, and endeavoured to calm the transports of terror, which, at times, assailed him. In the mean while, he took such precautions as his situation admitted of, passing the greater part of the day out of the village, in a spot from whence he had a view of the road for some distance ; yet to be exposed to destruction by the illness of a girl, whom he did not know, and who had actually been forced upon him, was a misfortune, to which La Motte had not philosophy enough to submit with composure.

Adeline's fever continued to increase during the whole day, and at night, when the physician took his leave, he told La Motte the event would very soon be decided. La Motte received this hint of
her

her danger with real concern. The beauty and innocence of Adeline had overcome the disadvantageous circumstances under which she had been introduced to him, and he now gave less consideration to the inconvenience she might hereafter occasion him, than to the hope of her recovery.

Madame la Motte watched over her with tender anxiety, and observed, with admiration, her patient sweetness and mild resignation. Adeline amply repaid her, though she thought she could not. "Young as I am," she would say, "and deserted by those upon whom
 "I have a claim for protection, I can
 "remember no connection to make me
 "regret life so much, as that I hope
 "to form with you. If I live, my conduct will best express my sense of your
 "goodness—words are but feeble testimonies."

The sweetness of her manners so much attracted Madame La Motte, that she

watched the crisis of her disorder with a solicitude which precluded every other interest. Adeline passed a very disturbed night, and, when the physician appeared in the morning, he gave orders that she should be indulged with whatever she liked, and answered the inquiries of La Motte with a frankness that left him nothing to hope.

In the mean time, his patient, after drinking profusely of some mild liquids, fell asleep, in which she continued for several hours, and so profound was her repose, that her breath alone gave sign of existence. She awoke free from fever, and with no other complaint than weakness, which, in a few days, she overcame so well, as to be able to set out with La Motte for B——, a village out of the great road, which he thought it prudent to quit. There they passed the following night, and early the next morning commenced their journey upon a wild and woody

woody tract of country. They stopped about noon at a solitary village, where they took refreshments, and obtained directions for passing the vast forest of Fontanville, upon the borders of which they now were. La Motte wished at first to take a guide, but he apprehended more evil from the disclosure he might make of his route, than he hoped for benefit from assistance in the wilds of this uncultivated tract.

La Motte now designed to pass on to Lyons, where he could either seek concealment in its neighbourhood, or embark on the Rhone for Geneva, should the emergency of his circumstances hereafter require him to leave France. It was about twelve o'clock at noon, and he was desirous to hasten forward, that he might pass the forest of Fontanville, and reach the town on its opposite borders, before night-fall. Having deposited a fresh stock of provisions in the carriage,

and received such directions as were necessary concerning the roads, they again set forward, and in a short time entered upon the forest. It was now the latter end of April, and the weather was remarkably temperate and fine. The balmy freshness of the air, which breathed the first pure essence of vegetation, and the gentle warmth of the sun, whose beams vivified every hue of nature, and opened every floweret of spring, revived Adeline, and inspired her with life and health. As she inhaled the breeze, her strength seemed to return, and, as her eyes wandered through the romantic glades that opened into the forest, her heart was gladdened with complacent delight: but when from these objects she turned her regard upon Monsieur and Madame La Motte, to whose tender attentions she owed her life, and in whose looks she now read esteem and kindness, her bosom glowed with sweet affections, and
she

he experienced a force of gratitude which might be called sublime.

For the remainder of the day they continued to travel, without seeing a hut, or meeting a human being. It was now near sun-set, and the prospect being closed on all sides by the forest, La Motte began to have apprehensions that his servant had mistaken the way. The road, if a road it could be called, which afforded only a slight track upon the grass, was sometimes over-run by luxuriant vegetation, and sometimes obscured by the deep shades, and Peter at length stopped, uncertain of the way. La Motte, who dreaded being benighted in a scene so wild and solitary as this forest, and whose apprehensions of banditti were very sanguine, ordered him to proceed at any rate, and, if he found no track, to endeavour to gain a more open part of the forest. With these orders, Peter again set forwards, but having proceeded some way, and his views being still con-

lined by woody glades and forest walks, he began to despair of extricating himself, and stopped for farther orders. The sun was now set; but, as La Motte looked anxiously from the window, he observed upon the vivid glow of the western horizon, some dark towers rising from among the trees at a little distance, and ordered Peter to drive towards them. "If they belong to a monastery," said he, "we may probably gain admittance for the night."

The carriage drove along under the shade of "melancholy boughs," through which the evening twilight, which yet coloured the air, diffused a solemnity that vibrated in thrilling sensations upon the hearts of the travellers. Expectation kept them silent. The present scene recalled to Adeline a remembrance of the late terrific circumstances, and her mind responded but too easily to the apprehension of new misfortunes. La Motte

Motte alighted at the foot of a green knoll, where the trees again opening to light, permitted a nearer, though imperfect view of the edifice.

"What a fearful prospect! How dark and gloomy the tower!"
 "And yet, dear countess, did the landscape look so dark?"
 "The perspective seems to have the effect of that."
 "And yet, dear lady, I am not deceived."
 "My sister's kind of words are not to be trusted."
 "I know not where to go. What a kind of being!"
 "Is circumstance?"
 "Horace Walpole."

He approached, and perceived the Gothic remains of an abbey, it stood on a kind of rude lawn, overgrown by high and spreading trees, which formed a covert with the building and diffused a romantic gloom around. The general view of the site appeared to be strikingly unusual, and that which had unfolded in the view of the house, showed the ruinous decay. The lofty battlements, thickly encrusted with ivy, were half demolished.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

" What awful silence! How these antique towers,
 " And vacant courts, chill the suspended soul!
 " Till expectation wears the face of fear;
 " And fear, half ready to become devotion,
 " Mutters a kind of mental orison,
 " It knows not wherefore. What a kind of being
 " Is circumstance !"

HORACE WALPOLE.

HE approached, and perceived the Gothic remains of an abbey: it stood on a kind of rude lawn, overshadowed by high and spreading trees, which seemed coeval with the building, and diffused a romantic gloom around. The greater part of the pile appeared to be sinking into ruins, and that, which had withstood the ravages of time, shewed the remaining features of the fabric more awful in decay. The lofty battlements, thickly enwreathed with ivy, were half demolished,

ed, and become the residence of birds of prey. Huge fragments of the eastern tower, which was almost demolished, lay scattered amid the high grass, that waved slowly to the breeze. "The thistle
 "hook its lonely head; the moss whistled to the wind." A Gothic gate, richly ornamented with fret-work, which opened into the main body of the edifice, but which was now obstructed with brush-wood, remained entire. Above the vast and magnificent portal of this gate arose a window of the same order, whose pointed arches still exhibited fragments of stained glass, once the pride of monkish devotion. La Motte, thinking it possible it might yet shelter some human being, advanced to the gate and lifted a massy knocker. The hollow sounds rung through the emptiness of the place. After waiting a few minutes, he forced back the gate, which was heavy with iron work, and creaked harshly on its hinges.

He

He entered what appeared to have been the chapel of the abbey, where the hymn of devotion had once been raised, and the tear of penitence had once been shed; sounds, which could now only be recalled by imagination—tears of penitence, which had been long since fixed in fate. La Motte paused a moment, for he felt a sensation of sublimity rising into terror—a suspension of mingled astonishment and awe! He surveyed the vastness of the place, and as he contemplated its ruins, fancy bore him back to past ages. “And these walls,” said he, “where once superstition lurked, and “austerity anticipated an earthly purgatory, now tremble over the mortal remains of the beings who reared them!”

The deepening gloom reminded La Motte that he had no time to lose; but curiosity prompted him to explore farther, and he obeyed the impulse. As he walked over the broken pavement, the sound of his steps ran in echoes through the

the place, and seemed like the mysterious accents of the dead, reproving the sacrilegious mortal who thus dared to disturb their holy precincts.

From this chapel he passed into the nave of the great church, of which one window, more perfect than the rest, opened upon a long vista of the forest, and through this was seen the rich colouring of evening, melting by imperceptible gradations into the solemn gray of upper air. Dark hills, whose outline appeared distinctly upon the vivid glow of the horizon, closed the perspective. Several of the pillars, which had once supported the roof, remained the proud effigies of sinking greatness, and seemed to nod at every murmur of the blast over the fragments of those that had fallen a little before them. La Motte sighed. "The comparison between himself and the gradation of decay, which these columns exhibited, was but too obvious and affecting. "A few years," said he, "and
"I shall

“ I shall become like the mortals on
 “ whose reliques I now gaze, and, like
 “ them too, I may be the subject of me-
 “ ditation to a succeeding generation,
 “ which shall totter but a little while
 “ over the object they contemplate, ere
 “ they also sink into the dust.”

Retiring from the scene, he walked
 through the cloisters, till a door, which
 communicated with a lofty part of the
 building, attracted his curiosity. He
 opened this and perceived, across the
 foot of a stair-case, another door;—
 but now, partly checked by fear and
 partly by the recollection of the surprize
 his family might feel in his absence, he
 returned with hasty steps to his carriage,
 having wasted some of the precious mo-
 ments of twilight, and gained no infor-
 mation.

Some slight answer to Madame La
 Motte's inquiries, and a general direc-
 tion to Peter to drive carefully on, and
 look for a road, was all that his anxiety
 would

would permit him to utter. The night shade fell thick around, which, deepened by the gloom of the forest, soon rendered it dangerous to proceed. Peter stopped, but La Motte, persisting in his first determination, ordered him to go on. Peter ventured to remonstrate, Madame La Motte entreated, but La Motte reproved—commanded, and at length repented; for the hind wheel rising upon the stump of an old tree, which the darkness had prevented Peter from observing, the carriage was in an instant overturned.

The party, as may be supposed, were much terrified, but no one was materially hurt, and having disengaged themselves from their perilous situation, La Motte and Peter endeavoured to raise the carriage. The extent of this misfortune was now discovered, for they perceived that the wheel was broke. Their distress was reasonably great, for not only was the coach disabled from proceeding, but it could not even afford a shelter
from

from the cold dews of the night, it being impossible to preserve it in an upright situation. After a few moments silence, La Motte proposed that they should return to the ruins they had just quitted, which lay at a very short distance, and pass the night in the most habitable part of them; that, when morning dawned, Peter should take one of the coach horses, and endeavour to find a road and a town, from whence assistance could be procured for repairing the carriage. This proposal was opposed by Madame La Motte, who shuddered at the idea of passing so many hours of darkness in a place so forlorn as the monastery. Terrors, which she neither endeavoured to examine, or combat, overcame her, and she told La Motte she had rather remain exposed to the unwholesome dews of night, than encounter the desolation of the ruins. La Motte had at first felt an equal reluctance to return to this spot, but having subdued his own feelings,

feelings, he resolved not to yield to those of his wife.

The horses being now disengaged from the carriage, the party moved towards the edifice. As they proceeded, Peter, who followed them, struck a light, and they entered the ruins by the flame of sticks, which he had collected. The partial gleams thrown across the fabric seemed to make its desolation more solemn, while the obscurity of the greater part of the pile heightened its sublimity, and led fancy on to scenes of horror. Adeline, who had hitherto remained silent, now uttered an exclamation of mingled admiration and fear. A kind of pleasing dread thrilled her bosom, and filled all her soul. Tears started to her eyes;—she wished, yet feared, to go on;—she hung upon the arm of La Motte, and looked at him with a sort of hesitating interrogation.

He opened the door of the great hall, and they entered; its extent was lost in gloom.

gloom. "Let us stay here," said Madame de la Motte, "I will go no farther." La Motte pointed to the broken roof, and was proceeding, when he was interrupted by an uncommon noise, which passed along the hall. They were all silent—it was the silence of terror. Madame La Motte spoke first. "Let us quit this spot," said she, "almost any evil is preferable to the feeling which now oppresses me. Let us retire instantly." The stillness had for some time remained undisturbed, and La Motte, ashamed of the fear he had involuntarily betrayed, now thought it necessary to affect a boldness, which he did not feel. He, therefore, opposed ridicule to the terror of Madame, and insisted upon proceeding. Thus compelled to acquiesce, she traversed the hall with trembling steps. They came to a narrow passage, and Peter's sticks being nearly exhausted, they awaited here, while he went in search of more.

The

The almost expiring light flashed faintly upon the walls of the passage, shewing the recess more horrible. Across the hall, the greater part of which was concealed in shadow, the feeble ray spread a tremulous gleam, exhibiting the chasm in the roof, while many nameless objects were seen imperfectly through the dusk. Adeline with a smile, inquired of La Motte, if he believed in spirits. The question was ill-timed, for the present scene impressed its terrors upon La Motte, and, in spite of endeavour, he felt a superstitious dread stealing upon him. He was now, perhaps, standing over the ashes of the dead. If spirits were ever permitted to revisit the earth, this seemed the hour and the place most suitable for their appearance. La Motte remained silent. Adeline said, "Were I inclined to superstition"—She was interrupted by a return of the noise, which had been lately heard; it sounded down the passage, at whose entrance they stood, and

and sunk gradually away. Every heart palpitated, and they remained listening in silence. A new subject of apprehension seized La Motte:—the noise might proceed from banditti, and he hesitated whether it would be safe to go on. Peter now came with a light:—Madame refused to enter the passage—La Motte was not much inclined to it; but Peter, in whom curiosity was more prevalent than fear, readily offered his services. La Motte, after some hesitation, suffered him to go, while he awaited at the entrance the result of the inquiry. The extent of the passage soon concealed Peter from view, and the echoes of his footsteps were lost in a sound, which rushed along the avenue, and became fainter and fainter, till it sunk into silence. La Motte now called aloud to Peter, but no answer was returned; at length, they heard the sound of a distant footstep, and Peter soon after appeared, breathless, and pale with fear.

When

When he came within hearing of La Motte, he called out, "An' please your Honour, I've done for them, I believe, but I've had a hard bout. I thought I was fighting with the devil."—— "What are you speaking of?" said La Motte.

"They were nothing but owls and rooks after all," continued Peter; "but the light brought them all about my ears, and they made such a confused clapping with their wings, that I thought at first I had been beset with a legion of devils. But I have drove them all out, Master, and you have nothing to fear now."

The latter part of the sentence, intimating a suspicion of his courage, La Motte could have dispensed with, and, to retrieve, in some degree, his reputation, he made a point of proceeding through the passage. They now moved on with alacrity, for, as Peter said, "they had nothing to fear."

The passage led into a large area, on one side of which, over a range of cloisters, appeared the west tower, and a lofty part of the edifice; the other side was open to the woods. La Motte led the way to a door of the tower, which he now perceived was the same he had formerly entered; but he found some difficulty in advancing, for the area was overgrown with brambles and nettles, and the light which Peter carried afforded only an uncertain gleam. When he unclosed the door, the dismal aspect of the place revived the apprehensions of Madame La Motte, and extorted from Adeline an inquiry whither they were going. Peter held up the light to shew the narrow staircase that wound round the tower; but La Motte, observing the second door, drew back the rusty bolts, and entered a spacious apartment, which, from its style and condition, was evidently of a much later date than the other part of the structure: though desolate and forlorn,

lorn, it was very little impaired by time; the walls were damp, but not decayed; and the glass was yet firm in the windows.

They passed on to a suite of apartments resembling the first they had seen, and expressed their surprize at the incongruous appearance of this part of the edifice with the mouldering walls they had left behind. These apartments conducted them to a winding passage, that received light and air through narrow cavities, placed high in the wall; and was at length closed by a door barred with iron, which being with some difficulty opened, they entered a vaulted room. La Motte surveyed it with a scrutinizing eye, and endeavoured to conjecture for what purpose it had been guarded by a door of such strength; but he saw little within to assist his curiosity. The room appeared to have been built in modern times upon a Gothic plan. Adeline approached a large window that

formed a kind of recess raised by one step over the level of the floor ; she observed to La Motte that the whole floor was inlaid with Mosaic work ; which drew from him a remark, that the style of this apartment was not strictly Gothic. He passed on to a door, which appeared on the opposite side of the room, and, unlocking it, found himself in the great hall, by which he had entered the fabric.

He now perceived, what the gloom had before concealed, a spiral staircase which led to a gallery above ; and which, from its present condition, seemed to have been built with the more modern part of the fabric, though this also affected the Gothic mode of architecture. La Motte had little doubt that these stairs led to apartments corresponding with those he had passed below, and hesitated whether to explore them ; but the entreaties of Madame, who was much fatigued, prevailed with him to defer all farther
 examina-

examination. After some deliberation, in which of the rooms they should pass the night, they determined to return to that which opened from the tower.

A fire was kindled on a hearth, which it is probable had not for many years before afforded the warmth of hospitality; and Peter having spread the provision he had brought from the coach, La Motte and his family, encircling the fire, partook of a repast, which hunger and fatigue made delicious. Apprehension gradually gave way to confidence, for they now found themselves in something like a human habitation, and they had leisure to laugh at their late terrors; but, as the blast shook the doors, Adeline often started, and threw a fearful glance around. They continued to laugh and talk cheerfully for a time; yet their merriment was transient, if not affected, for a sense of their peculiar and distressed circumstances pressed

upon their recollection, and sunk each individual into langour and pensive silence. Adeline felt the forlornness of her condition with energy; she reflected upon the past with astonishment, and anticipated the future with fear. She found herself wholly dependant upon strangers, with no other claim than what distress demands from the common sympathy of kindred beings; sighs swelled her heart, and the frequent tear started to her eye; but she checked it, ere it betrayed on her cheek the sorrow, which she thought it would be ungrateful to reveal.

La Motte, at length, broke this meditative silence, by directing the fire to be renewed for the night, and the door to be secured; this seemed a necessary precaution, even in this solitude, and was effected by means of large stones piled against it, for other fastening there was none. It had frequently occurred to La Motte, that this apparently forsaken edifice

edifice might be a place of refuge to banditti. Here was solitude to conceal them; and a wild and extensive forest to assist their schemes of rapine, and to perplex, with its labyrinths, those who might be bold enough to attempt pursuit. These apprehensions, however, he hid within his own bosom, saving his companions from a share of the uneasiness they occasioned. Peter was ordered to watch at the door, and, having given the fire a rousing stir, our desolate party drew round it, and fought in sleep a short oblivion of care.

The night passed on without disturbance. Adeline slept, but uneasy dreams flitted before her fancy, and she awoke at an early hour: the recollection of her sorrows arose upon her mind, and yielding to their pressure, her tears flowed silently and fast. That she might indulge them without restraint, she went to a distant window that looked upon an open part of the forest; all without was

gloom and silence: she stood for some time viewing the shadowy scene.

The first tender tints of morning now appeared on the verge of the horizon, stealing upon the darkness;—so pure, so fine, so æthereal! it seemed as if Heaven was opening to the view. The dark mists were seen to roll off to the west, as the tints of light grew stronger, deepening the obscurity of that part of the hemisphere, and involving the features of the country below: meanwhile, in the east, the hues became more vivid, darting a trembling lustre far around, till a ruddy glow, which fired all that part of the Heavens, announced the rising sun. At first, a small line of inconceivable splendour emerged on the horizon, which quickly expanding, the sun appeared in all his glory, unveiling the whole face of nature, vivifying every colour of the landscape, and sprinkling the dewy earth with glittering light. The low and gentle responses of birds, awakened by the morning

morning ray, now broke the silence of the hour; their soft warbling rising by degrees till they swelled the chorus of universal gladness. Adeline's heart swelled too with gratitude and adoration.

The scene before her soothed her mind, and exalted her thoughts to the great Author of Nature; she uttered an involuntary prayer: "Father of Good, " who made this glorious scene! I resign myself to thy hands: thou wilt support me under my present sorrows, " and protect me from future evil."

Thus confiding in the benevolence of God, she wiped the tears from her eyes, while the sweet unison of conscience and reflection rewarded her trust; and her mind, losing the feelings which had lately oppressed it, became tranquil and composed.

La Motte awoke soon after, and Peter prepared to set out on his expedition. As he mounted his horse, "An' please you, Master," said he, "I think we had as good look no farther

“ for an habitation till better times turn
 “ up ; for nobody will think of looking
 “ for us here ; and when one sees the place
 “ by day-light, its none so bad, but what a
 “ little patching up would make it com-
 “ fortable enough.” La Motte made
 no reply, but he thought of Peter’s
 words. During the intervals of the
 night, when anxiety had kept him wak-
 ing, the same idea had occurred to him ;
 concealment was his only security, and
 this place afforded it. The desolation of
 the spot was repulsive to his wishes ;
 but he had only a choice of evils—a fo-
 rest with liberty was not a bad home for
 one who had too much reason to expect
 a prison. As he walked through the
 apartments, and examined their condi-
 tion more attentively, he perceived they
 might easily be made habitable ; and now
 surveying them under the cheerfulness of
 morning, his design strengthened ; and
 he mused upon the means of accomplish-
 ing it, which nothing seemed so much

to obstruct as the apparent difficulty of procuring food.

He communicated his thoughts to Madame La Motte, who felt repugnance to the scheme. La Motte, however, seldom consulted his wife till he had determined how to act; and he had already resolved to be guided in this affair by the report of Peter. If he could discover a town in the neighbourhood of the forest, where provisions and other necessaries could be procured, he would seek no farther for a place of rest.

In the mean time, he spent the anxious interval of Peter's absence in examining the ruin, and walking over the environs; they were sweetly romantic, and the luxuriant woods, with which they abounded, seemed to sequester this spot from the rest of the world. Frequently a natural vista would yield a view of the country, terminated by hills, which, retiring in distance, faded into the blue horizon. A stream, various and musical in its course,

wound at the foot of the lawn, on which stood the abbey; here it silently glided beneath the shades, feeding the flowers that bloomed on its banks, and diffusing dewy freshness around; there it spread in broad expanse to day, reflecting the sylvan scene, and the wild deer that tasted its waves. La Motte observed every where a profusion of game; the pheasants scarcely flew from his approach, and the deer gazed mildly at him as he passed. They were strangers to man!

On his return to the abbey, La Motte ascended the stairs that led to the tower. About half way up, a door appeared in the wall; it yielded, without resistance, to his hand; but a sudden noise within, accompanied by a cloud of dust, made him step back and close the door. After waiting a few minutes he again opened it, and perceived a large room of the more modern building. The remains of tapestry hung in tatters upon the walls, which were become the residence

dence of birds of prey, whose sudden flight, on the opening of the door, had brought down a quantity of dust, and occasioned the noise. The windows were shattered, and almost without glass; but he was surprized to observe some remains of furniture; chairs, whose fashion and condition bore the date of their antiquity; a broken table, and an iron grate almost consumed by rust.

On the opposite side of the room was a door, which led to another apartment, proportioned like the first, but hung with arras somewhat less tattered. In one corner stood a small bedstead, and a few shattered chairs were placed round the walls. La Motte gazed with a mixture of wonder and curiosity; " 'Tis
 " strange," said he, " that these rooms,
 " and these alone, should bear the marks
 " of inhabitation: perhaps, some wretch-
 " ed wanderer, like myself, may have
 " here sought refuge from a persecuting
 " world; and here, perhaps, laid down
 " the

“ the load of existence : perhaps, too,
 “ I have followed his footsteps, but to
 “ mingle my dust with his !” He
 turned suddenly, and was about to quit
 the room, when he perceived a door
 near the bed ; it opened into a closet,
 which was lighted by one small window,
 and was in the same condition as the apart-
 ments he had passed, except that it was
 destitute even of the remains of furniture.
 As he walked over the floor he thought
 he felt one part of it shake beneath his
 steps, and, examining, found a trap-
 door. Curiosity prompted him to ex-
 plore farther, and with some difficulty he
 opened it : it disclosed a staircase which
 terminated in darkness. La Motte de-
 scended a few steps, but was unwilling
 to trust the abyss ; and, after wondering
 for what purpose it was so secretly con-
 structed, he closed the trap, and quitted
 this suite of apartments.

The stairs in the tower above were so
 much decayed, that he did not attempt
 to

to ascend them; he returned to the hall, and by the spiral staircase, which he had observed the evening before, reached the gallery, and found another suite of apartments entirely unfurnished, very much like those below.

He renewed with Madame La Motte his former conversation respecting the abbey, and she exerted all her endeavours to dissuade him from his purpose, acknowledging the solitary security of the spot, but pleading that other places might be found equally well adapted for concealment, and more for comfort. This La Motte doubted: besides, the forest abounded with game, which would, at once, afford him amusement and food; a circumstance, considering his small stock of money, by no means to be overlooked: and he had suffered his mind to dwell so much upon the scheme, that it was become a favourite one. Adeline listened in silent anxiety to the discourse, and waited with impatience the issue of Peter's report.

The

The morning passed, but Peter did not return. Our solitary party took their dinner of the provision they had fortunately brought with them, and afterwards walked forth into the woods. Adeline, who never suffered any good to pass unnoticed, because it came attended with evil, forgot for a while the desolation of the abbey in the beauty of the adjacent scenery. The pleasantness of the shades soothed her heart, and the varied features of the landscape amused her fancy; she almost thought she could be contented to live here. Already she began to feel an interest in the concerns of her companions, and for Madame La Motte she felt more; it was the warm emotion of gratitude and affection.

The afternoon wore away, and they returned to the abbey. Peter was still absent, and his absence now began to excite surprise and apprehension. The approach of darkness also threw a gloom upon the hopes of the wanderers; another

ther night must be passed under the same forlorn circumstances as the preceding one; and, what was still worse, with a very scanty stock of provisions. The fortitude of Madame La Motte now entirely forsook her, and she wept bitterly. Adeline's heart was as mournful as Madame's; but she rallied her drooping spirits, and gave the first instance of her kindness by endeavouring to revive those of her friend.

La Motte was restless and uneasy, and, leaving the abbey, he walked alone the way which Peter had taken. He had not gone far, when he perceived him between the trees, leading his horse. "What news, Peter?" hallooed La Motte. Peter came on, panting for breath, and said not a word, till La Motte repeated the question in a tone of somewhat more authority. "Ah, bless you, Master!" said he, when he had taken breath to answer, "I am glad to see you; I thought I should never have
" got

“ got back again; I’ve met with a world
“ of misfortunes.”

“ Well, you may relate them hereaf-
“ ter; let me hear whether you have
“ discovered—”

“ Discovered !” interrupted Peter,
“ Yes, I am discovered with a ven-
“ gence ! If your Honour will look at
“ my arms, you’ll see how I am disco-
“ vered ?”

“ Discoloured ! I suppose you mean,”
said La Motte : “ But how came you in
“ this condition ?”

“ Why, I’ll tell you how it was, Sir :
“ your Honour knows I learned a smack
“ of boxing of that Englishman that used
“ to come with his master to our house.”
“ Well, well—tell me where you have
“ been.”

“ I scarcely know myself, Master ;
“ I’ve been where I got a sound drub-
“ bing, but then it was in your business,
“ and so I don’t mind. But if ever I
“ meet with that rascal again !”

“ You

“ You seem to like your first drub-
 “ bing so well, that you want another,
 “ and unless you speak more to the pur-
 “ pose, you shall soon have one.”

Peter was now frightened into method, and endeavoured to proceed:
 “ When I left the old abbey,” said he,
 “ I followed the way you directed, and
 “ turning to the right of that grove of
 “ trees yonder, I looked this way and
 “ that to see if I could see a house, or
 “ a cottage, or even a man; but not a
 “ *soul* of them was to be seen, and so I
 “ jogged on, near the value of a league,
 “ I warrant, and then I came to a track;
 “ oh! ho! says I, we have you now;
 “ this will do—paths can’t be made
 “ without feet. However I was out in
 “ my reckoning, for the devil a bit of a
 “ *soul* could I see, and, after following
 “ the track this way and that way, for
 “ the third of a league, I lost it, and had
 “ to find out another.”

“ Is

“Is it impossible for you to speak to
 “the point?” said La Motte: “omit
 “these foolish particulars, and tell whe-
 “ther you have succeeded.”

“Well, then, Master, to be short,
 “for that’s the nearest way after all, I
 “wandered a long while at random, I
 “did not know where, all through a
 “forest like this, and I took special care
 “to note how the trees stood, that I
 “might find my way back. At last I
 “came to another path, and was sure I
 “should find something now, though I
 “had found nothing before, for I could
 “not be mistaken twice: so, peeping
 “between the trees, I spied a cottage,
 “and I gave my horse a lash, that
 “sounded through the forest, and I was
 “at the door in a minute. They told
 “me there was a town about half a
 “league off, and bade me follow the
 “track and it would bring me there; so
 “it did; and my horse, I believe, smelt
 “the corn in the manger, by the rate
 “he

" he went at. I inquired for a wheel-
 " wright, and was told there was but
 " one in the place, and he could not be
 " found. I waited and waited, for I
 " knew it was in vain to think of return-
 " ing without doing my business. The
 " man at last came home from the coun-
 " try, and I told him how long I had
 " waited; for, says I, I knew it was in
 " vain to return without my business."

" Do be less tedious," said La Motte,
 " if it is in thy nature."

" It is in my nature," answered Peter,
 " and if it was more in my nature, your
 " Honour should have it all. Would
 " you think it, Sir, the fellow had the
 " impudence to ask a louis-d'or for
 " mending the coach wheel? I believe
 " in my conscience he saw I was in a
 " hurry, and could not do without him.
 " A louis-d'or! says I, my Master shall
 " give no such price; he sha'n't be im-
 " posed upon by no such rascal as you.
 " Whereupon, the fellow looked glum,
 " and

“ and gave me a dose o’ the chops: with
 “ this, I up with my fist and gave him
 “ another, and should have beat him
 “ presently, if another man had not
 “ come in, and then I was obliged to
 “ give up.”

“ And so you are returned as wife as
 “ you went.”

“ Why, Master, I hope I have too
 “ much spirit to submit to a rascal, or
 “ let you submit to one either: besides,
 “ I have bought some nails, to try if I
 “ can’t mend the wheel myself—I had
 “ always a hand at carpentry.”

“ Well, I commend your zeal in my
 “ cause, but on this occasion it was ra-
 “ ther ill-timed. And what have you
 “ got in that basket?”

“ Why, Master, I bethought me that
 “ we could not get away from this place
 “ till the carriage was ready to draw us,
 “ and in the mean time, says I, nobody
 “ can live without victuals, so I’ll e’en
 “ lay

“ lay out the little money I have, and
“ take a basket with me.”

“ That’s the only wise thing you have
“ done yet, and this, indeed, redeems
“ your blunders.”

“ Why now, Master, it does my heart
“ good to hear you speak; I knew I was
“ doing for the best all the while: but
“ I’ve had a hard job to find my way
“ back; and here’s another piece of ill
“ luck, for the horse has got a thorn in
“ his foot.”

La Motte made inquiries concerning
the town, and found it was capable of
supplying him with provisions, and what
little furniture was necessary to render the
abbey habitable. This intelligence al-
most settled his plans, and he ordered
Peter to return on the following morn-
ing and make inquiries concerning the
abbey. If the answers were favourable
to his wishes, he commissioned him to
buy a cart, and load it with some furni-
ture, and some materials necessary for
repair-

repairing the modern apartments. Peter stared: "What, does your Honour mean to live here?"

"Why, suppose I do?"

"Why then your Honour has made a wise determination, according to my hint; for your Honour knows I said—"

"Well, Peter, it is not necessary to repeat what you said; perhaps I had determined on the subject before."

"Egad, Master, you're in the right, and I'm glad of it, for, I believe, we shall not quickly be disturbed here, except by the rooks and owls. Yes, yes—I warrant I'll make it a place fit for a king; and as for the town, one may get any thing there, I'm sure of that; though they think no more about this place than they do about India, or England, or any of those places."

They now reached the abbey, where Peter was received with great joy; but the hopes of his mistress and Adeline were

were repressed, when they learned that he returned, without having executed his commission, and heard his account of the town. La Motte's orders to Peter were heard with almost equal concern by Madame and Adeline; but the latter concealed her uneasiness, and used all her efforts to overcome that of her friend. The sweetness of her behaviour, and the air of satisfaction she assumed, sensibly affected Madame, and discovered to her a source of comfort, which she had hitherto overlooked. The affectionate attentions of her young friend promised to console her for the want of other society, and her conversation to enliven the hours, which might otherwise be passed in painful regret.

The remarks and general behaviour of Adeline already bespoke a good understanding and an amiable heart, but she had yet more—she had genius. She was now in her nineteenth year; her figure of the middling size, and turned

to the most exquisite proportion; her hair was dark auburn, her eyes blue, and whether they sparkled with intelligence, or melted with tenderness, they were equally attractive: her form had the airy lightness of a nymph, and, when she smiled, her countenance might have been drawn for the younger sister of Hebe: the captivations of her beauty were heightened by the grace and simplicity of her manners, and confirmed by the intrinsic value of a heart

“ That might be shrin’d in crystal,

“ And have all its movements scann’d.”

Annette now kindled the fire for the night: Peter’s basket was opened, and supper prepared. Madame La Motte was still pensive and silent, which Adeline observing, said cheerfully, “ There is scarcely any condition
“ so bad, but we may, one time or
“ other, with we had not quitted it. Ho-
“ nest Peter, when he was bewildered
“ in the forest, or had two enemies to
“ encounter

“ encounter instead of one, confesses he
 “ wished himself at the abbey. And I
 “ am certain, there is no situation so
 “ destitute, but comfort may be ex-
 “ tracted from it. The blaze of this fire
 “ shines yet more cheerfully from the
 “ contrasted dreariness of the place, and
 “ this plentiful repast is made yet more
 “ delicious, from the temporary want we
 “ have suffered. Let us enjoy the good
 “ and forget the evil.”

“ You speak, my dear,” replied Ma-
 dame La Motte, “ like one whose spi-
 “ rits have not been often depressed by
 “ misfortune,” (Adeline sighed), and
 “ whose hopes are, therefore, vigorous.”
 “ —Long suffering,” said La Motte,
 “ has subdued in our minds that elastic
 “ energy, which repels the pressure of
 “ evil, and dances to the bound of joy.
 “ But I speak in rhapsody, though only
 “ from the remembrance of such a time.
 “ I once, like you, Adeline, could ex-
 “ tract comfort from most situations.”

“ And may now, my dear Sir,” said Adeline : “ Still believe it possible, and
 “ you will find it is so.”

“ The illusion is gone—I can no longer deceive myself.”

“ Pardon me, Sir, if I say, it is now
 “ only you deceive yourself, by suffering
 “ the cloud of sorrow to tinge every ob-
 “ ject you look upon.”

“ It may be so,” said La Motte ; “ but
 “ let us leave the subject.”

After supper the doors were secured, as before, for the night, and the wanderers resigned themselves to repose.

On the following morning, Peter again set out for the little town of Auboine, and the hours of his absence were again spent by Madame La Motte and Adeline in much anxiety and some hope ; for the intelligence he might bring concerning the abbey, might yet release them from the plans of La Motte. Towards the close of day he was descried coming slowly on ; and the cart, which accom-
 panied

panied him, too certainly confirmed their fears. He brought materials for repairing the place, and some furniture.

Of the abbey he gave an account, of which the following is the substance:— It belonged, together with a large part of the adjacent forest, to a nobleman, who now resided with his family on a remote estate. He inherited it, in right of his wife, from his father-in-law, who had caused the more modern apartments to be erected, and had resided in them some part of every year, for the purposes of shooting and hunting. It was reported, that some person was, soon after it came to the present possessor, brought secretly to the abbey, and confined in these apartments; who, or what he was, had never been conjectured, and what became of him nobody knew. The report died gradually away, and many persons entirely disbelieved the whole of it. But, however this affair might be, certain it was, the present owner had

visited the abbey only two summers since his succeeding to it; and the furniture, after some time, was removed.

This circumstance had at first excited surprize, and various reports arose in consequence, but it was difficult to know what ought to be believed. Among the rest, it was said, that strange appearances had been observed at the abbey, and uncommon noises heard; and though this report had been ridiculed by sensible persons as the idle superstition of ignorance, it had fastened so strongly upon the minds of the common people, that for the last seventeen years none of the peasantry had ventured to approach the spot. The abbey was now, therefore, abandoned to decay.

La Motte ruminated upon this account. At first, it called up unpleasant ideas, but they were soon dismissed, and considerations more interesting to his welfare took place: he congratulated himself that he had now found a spot, where
 he

He was not likely to be either discovered or disturbed; yet it could not escape him that there was a strange coincidence between one part of Peter's narrative, and the condition of the chambers that opened from the tower above stairs. The remains of furniture, of which the other apartments were void—the solitary bed—the number and connection of the rooms, were circumstances that united to confirm his opinion. This, however, he concealed in his own breast, for he already perceived that Peter's account had not assisted in reconciling his family to the necessity of dwelling at the abbey.

But they had only to submit in silence, and whatever disagreeable apprehension might intrude upon them, they now appeared willing to suppress the expression of it. Peter, indeed, was exempt from any evil of this kind; he knew no fear, and his mind was now wholly occupied with his approaching business. Madame La Motte, with a placid kind

of despair, endeavoured to reconcile herself to that, which no effort of understanding could teach her to avoid, and which, an indulgence in lamentation could only make more intolerable. Indeed, though a sense of the immediate inconveniences to be endured at the abbey, had made her oppose the scheme of living there, she did not really know how their situation could be improved by removal: yet her thoughts often wandered towards Paris, and reflected the retrospect of past times, with the images of weeping friends left, perhaps, for ever. The affectionate endearments of her only son, whom, from the danger of his situation, and the obscurity of her's, she might reasonably fear never to see again, arose upon her memory, and overcame her fortitude. "Why, why was I reserved for this hour?" would she say, "and what will be my years to come?"

Adeline had no retrospect of past delight to give emphasis to present calamity

mity—no weeping friends—no dear regretted objects to point the edge of sorrow, and throw a sickly hue upon her future prospects; she knew not yet the pangs of disappointed hope, or the acuter sting of self-accusation; she had no misery but what patience could assuage, or fortitude overcome.

At the dawn of the following day Peter arose to his labour: he proceeded with alacrity, and, in a few days, two of the lower apartments were so much altered for the better, that La Motte began to exult, and his family to perceive that their situation would not be so miserable as they had imagined. The furniture Peter had already brought was disposed in these rooms, one of which was the vaulted apartment. Madame La Motte furnished this as a sitting room, preferring it for its large Gothic window, that descended almost to the floor, admitting a prospect of the lawn, and the picturesque scenery of the surrounding woods.

Peter having returned to Auboine for a farther supply, all the lower apartments were in a few weeks not only habitable, but comfortable. These, however, being insufficient for the accommodation of the family, a room above stairs was prepared for Adeline: it was the chamber that opened immediately from the tower, and she preferred it to those beyond, because it was less distant from the family, and the windows fronting an avenue of the forest, afforded a more extensive prospect. The tapestry, that was decayed, and hung loosely from the walls, was now nailed up, and made to look less desolate; and, though the room had still a solemn aspect, from its spaciousness, and the narrowness of the windows, it was not uncomfortable.

The first night that Adeline retired hither, she slept little: the solitary air of the place affected her spirits; the more so, perhaps, because she had, with friendly consideration, endeavoured to
support

support them in the presence of Madame La Motte. She remembered the narrative of Peter, several circumstances of which had impressed her imagination in spite of her reason, and she found it difficult wholly to subdue apprehension. At one time, terror so strongly seized her mind, that she had even opened the door with an intention of calling Madame La Motte; but, listening for a moment on the stairs of the tower, every thing seemed still; at length, she heard the voice of La Motte speaking cheerfully, and the absurdity of her fears struck her forcibly; she blushed that she had for a moment submitted to them, and returned to her chamber wondering at herself.

C H A P. III.

" Are not these woods
 " More free from peril than the envious court ?
 " Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
 " The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
 " And churlish chiding of the winter's wind."

SHAKESPEARE.

LA Motte arranged his little plan of living. His mornings were usually spent in shooting, or fishing, and the dinner, thus provided by his industry, he relished with a keener appetite than had ever attended him at the luxurious tables of Paris. The afternoons he passed with his family : sometimes he would select a book from the few he had brought with him, and endeavour to fix his attention to the words his lips repeated :— but his mind suffered little abstraction from

from its own cares, and the sentiment he pronounced left no trace behind it. Sometimes he conversed, but oftener sat in gloomy silence, musing upon the past, or anticipating the future.

At these moments, Adeline, with a sweetness almost irresistible, endeavoured to enliven his spirits, and to withdraw him from himself. Seldom she succeeded, but when she did, the grateful looks of Madame La Motte, and the benevolent feelings of her own bosom, realized the cheerfulness she had at first only assumed. Adeline's mind had the happy art, or, perhaps, it were more just to say the happy nature, of accommodating herself to her situation. Her present condition, though forlorn, was not devoid of comfort, and this comfort was confirmed by her virtues. So much she won upon the affections of her protectors, that Madame La Motte loved her as her child, and La Motte himself, though a man little susceptible of tender-

tendernefs, could not be infenfible to her follicitudes. Whenever he relaxed from the fullennefs of misery, it was at the influence of Adeline.

Peter regularly brought a weekly fupply of provifions from Auboine, and, on thofe occafions, always quitted the town by a route contrary to that leading to the abbey. Several weeks having paffed without moleftation, La Motte difmiffed all apprehenfion of purfuit, and at length became tolerably reconciled to the completion of his circumftances. As habit and effort ftrengthened the fortitude of Madame La Motte, the features of misfortune appeared to foften. The foreft, which at firft feemed to her a frightful folitude, had loft its terrific afpect; and that edifice, whole half demolished walls and gloomy defolation had ftruck her mind with the force of melancholy and difmay, was now beheld as a domeftic afylum, and a fafe refuge from the ftorms of power.

She

She was a sensible and highly accomplished woman, and it became her chief delight to form the rising graces of Adeline, who had, as has been already shown, a sweetness of disposition, which made her quick to repay instruction with improvement, and indulgence with love. Never was Adeline so pleased as when she anticipated her wishes, and never so diligent as when she was employed in her business. The little affairs of the household she overlooked and managed with such admirable exactness, that Madame La Motte had neither anxiety, nor care, concerning them. And Adeline formed for herself in this barren situation many amusements, that occasionally banished the remembrance of her misfortunes. La Motte's books were her chief consolation. With one of these she would frequently ramble into the forest, to where the river, winding through a glade, diffused coolness, and with its murmuring accents invited repose; there she

she would seat herself, and, resigned to the illusions of the page, pass many hours in oblivion of sorrow.

Here too, when her mind was tranquillized by the surrounding scenery, she wooed the gentle muse, and indulged in ideal happiness. The delight of these moments she commemorated in the following address.

TO THE VISIONS OF FANCY.

Dear, wild illusions of creative mind!

Whose varying hues arise to Fancy's art,

And by her magic force are swift combin'd

In forms that please, and scenes that touch the heart:

Oh! whether at her voice ye soft assume

The pensive grace of Sorrow drooping low;

Or rise sublime on Terror's lofty plume,

And shake the soul with wildly-thrilling woe;

Or, sweetly bright, your gayer tints ye spread,

Bid scenes of pleasure steal upon my view,

Love wave his purple pinions o'er my head,

And wake the tender thought to passion true;

O! still—ye shadowy forms! attend my lonely hours,

Still chase my real cares with your illusive powers!

Madame

Madame La Motte had frequently expressed curiosity concerning the events of Adeline's life, and by what circumstances she had been thrown into a situation so perilous and mysterious as that in which La Motte had found her. Adeline had given a brief account of the manner in which she had been brought thither, but had always, with tears, entreated to be spared for that time from a particular relation of her history. Her spirits were not then equal to retrospection, but now that they were soothed by quiet, and strengthened by confidence, she one day gave Madame La Motte the following narration.

"I am the only child," said Adeline, "of Louis de St. Pierre, a chevalier of family, but of small fortune, who for many years resided at Paris. Of my mother I have a faint remembrance; I lost her when I was only seven years old, and this was my first misfortune."

"tune. At her death, my father gave up
 "house-keeping, boarded me in a con-
 "vent, and quitted Paris. Thus was I,
 "at this early period of my life, aban-
 "doned to strangers. My father came
 "sometimes to Paris; he then visited
 "me, and, I well remember the grief I
 "used to feel when he bade me farewell.
 "—On these occasions, which wrung
 "my heart with grief, he appeared un-
 "moved; so that I often thought he
 "had little tenderness for me. But he
 "was my father, and the only person to
 "whom I could look up for protection
 "and love.

"In this convent I continued till I was
 "twelve years old. A thousand times I
 "had entreated my father to take me
 "home, but, at first, motives of prudence,
 "and afterwards of avarice, prevented
 "him. I was now removed from this
 "convent, and placed in another, where I
 "learned my father intended I should
 "take the veil. I will not attempt to ex-
 "press

“ press my surprize and grief on this oc-
 “ casion. Too long I had been im-
 “ mured in the walls of a cloister, and
 “ too much had I seen of the sullen mi-
 “ sery of its votaries, not to feel horror
 “ and disgust at the prospect of being
 “ added to their number.

“ The Lady Abbess was a woman of
 “ rigid decorum and severe devotion; ex-
 “ act in the observance of every detail of
 “ form, and never forgave an offence
 “ against ceremony. It was her method,
 “ when she wanted to make converts to
 “ her order, to denounce and terrify ra-
 “ ther than to persuade and allure. Her’s
 “ were the arts of cunning practised upon
 “ fear, not those of sophistication upon
 “ reason. She employed numberless stra-
 “ tagems to gain me to her purpose, and
 “ they all wore the complexion of her
 “ character. But in the life to which she
 “ would have devoted me, I saw too ma-
 “ ny forms of real terror, to be overcome
 “ by the influence of her ideal host, and
 “ was

“ was resolute in rejecting the veil. Here
 “ I passed several years of miserable re-
 “ sistance against cruelty and superstition.
 “ My father I seldom saw; when I did, I
 “ entreated him to alter my destination,
 “ but he objected that his fortune was in-
 “ sufficient to support me in the world;
 “ and at length denounced vengeance on
 “ my head if I persisted in disobedience.

“ You, my dear Madam, can form lit-
 “ tle idea of the wretchedness of my situa-
 “ tion, condemned to perpetual impri-
 “ sonment, and imprisonment of the most
 “ dreadful kind, or to the vengeance of
 “ a father, from whom I had no appeal.
 “ My resolution relaxed—for some time
 “ I paused upon the choice of evils—but
 “ at length the horrors of a monastic life
 “ rose so fully to my view, that fortitude
 “ gave way before them. Excluded
 “ from the cheerful intercourse of socie-
 “ ty—from the pleasant view of nature
 “ —almost from the light of day—con-
 “ demned to silence—rigid formality—
 “ absti-

“ abstinence and penance—condemned
 “ to forego the delights of a world, which
 “ imagination painted in the gayest and
 “ most alluring colours, and whose hues
 “ were, perhaps, not the less captivating
 “ because they were only ideal:—such
 “ was the state to which I was destined.
 “ Again my resolution was invigorated;
 “ my father’s cruelty subdued tender-
 “ ness, and roused indignation. Since he
 “ can forget, said I, the affection of a
 “ parent, and condemn his child without
 “ remorse to wretchedness and despair—
 “ the bond of filial and parental duty no
 “ longer subsists between us—he has
 “ himself dissolved it, and I will yet
 “ struggle for liberty and life.

“ Finding me unmoved by menace,
 “ the Lady Abbess had now recourse
 “ to more subtle measures: she conde-
 “ scended to smile, and even to flatter;
 “ but her’s was the distorted smile of
 “ cunning, not the gracious emblem of
 “ kindness; it provoked disgust, instead
 “ of

“ of inspiring affection. She painted the
 “ character of a vestal in the most beau-
 “ tiful tints of art—its holy innocence—
 “ its mild dignity—its sublime devotion.
 “ I sighed as she spoke. This she regard-
 “ ed as a favourable symptom, and pro-
 “ ceeded on her picture with more ani-
 “ mation. She described the serenity of a
 “ monastic life—its security from the se-
 “ ductive charms, restless passions, and
 “ sorrowful vicissitudes of the world—
 “ the rapturous delights of religion, and
 “ the sweet reciprocal affection of the
 “ sisterhood.

“ So highly she finished the piece, that
 “ the lurking lines of cunning would, to
 “ an inexperienced eye, have escaped de-
 “ tection. Mine was too sorrowfully in-
 “ formed. Too often had I witnessed the
 “ secret tear and bursting sigh of vain re-
 “ gret, the fallen pinings of discontent,
 “ and the mute anguish of despair. My
 “ silence and my manner assured her of
 “ my incredulity, and it was with diffi-
 “ culty

“ culty that she preserved a decent com-
 “ posure.

“ My father, as may be imagined, was
 “ highly incensed at my perseverance,
 “ which he called obstinacy, but, what
 “ will not be so easily believed, he soon
 “ after relented, and appointed a day to
 “ take me from the convent. O! judge
 “ of my feelings when I received this
 “ intelligence. The joy it occasioned
 “ awakened all my gratitude; I forgot
 “ the former cruelty of my father, and
 “ that the present indulgence was less
 “ the effect of his kindness than of my
 “ resolution. I wept that I could not
 “ indulge his every wish.

“ What days of blissful expectation
 “ were those that preceded my depar-
 “ ture! The world, from which I had
 “ been hitherto secluded—the world, in
 “ which my fancy had been so often de-
 “ lighted to roam—whose paths were
 “ strewn with fadeless roses—whose eve-
 “ ry scene smiled in beauty and invited

“ to

“ to delight—where all the people were
 “ good, and all the good happy—Ah !
 “ *then* that world was bursting upon my
 “ view. Let me catch the rapturous re-
 “ membrance before it vanish ! It is like
 “ the passing lights of autumn, that
 “ gleam for a moment on a hill, and then
 “ leave it to darkness. I counted the days
 “ and hours that withheld me from this
 “ fairy land. It was in the convent only
 “ that people were deceitful and cruel :
 “ it was there only that misery dwelt. I
 “ was quitting it all ! How I pitied the
 “ poor nuns that were to be left behind.
 “ I would have given half that world I
 “ prized so much, had it been mine, to
 “ have taken them out with me.

“ The long-wished-for day at last ar-
 “ rived. My father came, and for a mo-
 “ ment my joy was lost in the sorrow of
 “ bidding farewell to my poor compa-
 “ nions, for whom I had never felt such
 “ warmth of kindness as at this instant.
 “ I was soon beyond the gates of the con-
 “ vent.

“ vent. I looked around me, and view-
 “ ed the vast vault of heaven no longer
 “ bounded by monastic walls, and the
 “ green earth extended in hill and dale to
 “ the round verge of the horizon! My
 “ heart danced with delight, tears swel-
 “ led in my eyes, and for some moments
 “ I was unable to speak. My thoughts
 “ rose to Heaven in sentiments of gra-
 “ titude to the Giver of all good.

“ At length, I turned to my father;
 “ dear Sir, said I, how I thank you for
 “ my deliverance, and how I wish I could
 “ do every thing to oblige you.

“ Return, then, to your convent, said
 “ he, in a harsh accent. I shuddered;
 “ his look and manner jarred the tone of
 “ my feelings; they struck discord upon
 “ my heart, which had before responded
 “ only to harmony. The ardour of joy
 “ was in a moment repressed, and every
 “ object around me was saddened with
 “ the gloom of disappointment. It was
 “ not that I suspected my father would

“ take me back to the convent ; but that
 “ his feelings seemed so very dissonant to
 “ the joy and gratitude which I had but
 “ a moment before felt and expressed to
 “ him.—Pardon, Madam, a relation of
 “ these trivial circumstances ; the strong
 “ vicissitudes of feeling which they im-
 “ pressed upon my heart, make me think
 “ them important, when they are, per-
 “ haps, only disgusting.”

“ No, my dear,” said Madame La
 Motte, “ they are interesting to me ;
 “ they illustrate little traits of character
 “ which I love to observe. You are
 “ worthy of all my regards, and from
 “ this moment I give my tenderest pity
 “ to your misfortunes, and my affection
 “ to your goodness.”

These words melted the heart of Ade-
 line ; she kissed the hand which Ma-
 dame held out, and remained a few mi-
 nutes silent. At length she said, “ May
 “ I deserve this goodness ! and may I
 “ ever be thankful to God, who, in giv-
 “ ing

“ing me such a friend, has raised me to
“comfort and hope!

“My father’s house was situated a few
“leagues on the other side of Paris, and,
“in our way to it, we passed through that
“city. What a novel scene! Where
“were now the solemn faces, the demure
“manners, I had been accustomed to see
“in the convent? Every countenance
“was here animated, either by busi-
“ness or pleasure; every step was airy,
“and every smile was gay. All the
“people appeared like friends; they
“looked and smiled at me; I smiled
“again, and wished to have told them
“how pleased I was. How delight-
“ful, said I, to live surrounded by
“friends!

“What crowded streets! What mag-
“nificent hotels! What splendid equi-
“pages! I scarcely observed that the
“streets were narrow, or the way dan-
“gerous. What bustle, what tumult,
“what delight! I could never be suffi-

"ciently thankful that I was removed
 "from the convent. Again, I was go-
 "ing to express my gratitude to my fa-
 "ther, but his looks forbad me, and I
 "was silent. I am too diffuse; even
 "the faint forms which memory reflects
 "of passed delight are grateful to the
 "heart. The shadow of pleasure is still
 "gazed upon with a melancholy enjoy-
 "ment, though the substance is fled be-
 "yond our reach.

"Having quitted Paris, which I left
 "with many sighs, and gazed upon till
 "the towers of every church dissolved
 "in distance from my view; we entered
 "upon a gloomy and unfrequented road.
 "It was evening when we reached a
 "wild heath; I looked round in search
 "of a human dwelling, but could find
 "none; and not a human being was to
 "be seen. I experienced something of
 "what I used to feel in the convent;
 "my heart had not been so sad since I
 "left

" left it. Of my father, who still sat in
 " silence, I inquired if we were near
 " home; he answered in the affirmative.
 " Night came on, however, before we
 " reached the place of our destination;
 " it was a lone house on the waste; but
 " I need not describe it to you, Madam.
 " When the carriage stopped, two men
 " appeared at the door, and assisted us
 " to alight; so gloomy were their coun-
 " tenances, and so few their words, I al-
 " most fancied myself again in the con-
 " vent. Certain it is, I had not seen such
 " melancholy faces since I quitted it.
 " Is this a part of the world I have so
 " fondly contemplated? said I.

" The interior appearance of the house
 " was desolate and mean; I was sur-
 " prised that my father had chosen such
 " a place for his habitation, and also that
 " no woman was to be seen; but I knew
 " that inquiry would only produce re-
 " proof, and was, therefore, silent. At
 E 3 " supper,

“ supper, the two men I had before seen
 “ sat down with us; they said little, but
 “ seemed to observe me much. I was
 “ confused and displeased, which, my
 “ father noticing, frowned at them with
 “ a look, which convinced me he meant
 “ more than I comprehended. When
 “ the cloth was drawn, my father took
 “ my hand and conducted me to the
 “ door of my chamber; having set
 “ down the candle, and wished me good-
 “ night, he left me to my own solitary
 “ thoughts.

“ How different were they from those
 “ I had indulged a few hours before!
 “ Then expectation, hope, delight, dan-
 “ ced before me; now melancholy and
 “ disappointment chilled the ardour of
 “ my mind, and discoloured my future
 “ prospect. The appearance of every
 “ thing around conduced to depress me.
 “ On the floor lay a small bed without
 “ curtains, or hangings; two old chairs
 “ and

“ and a table were all the remaining fur-
 “ niture in the room. I went to the
 “ window, with an intention of looking
 “ out upon the surrounding scene, and
 “ found it was grated. I was shocked
 “ at this circumstance, and, comparing
 “ it with the lonely situation, and the
 “ strange appearance of the house, toge-
 “ ther with the countenances and beha-
 “ viour of the men who had supped
 “ with us, I was lost in a labyrinth of
 “ conjecture.

“ At length I lay down to sleep; but
 “ the anxiety of my mind prevented re-
 “ pose; gloomy, unpleasing images flit-
 “ ted before my fancy, and I fell into a
 “ sort of waking dream; I thought that
 “ I was in a lonely forest with my father;
 “ his looks were severe, and his gestures
 “ menacing: he upbraided me for leaving
 “ the convent, and, while he spoke, drew
 “ from his pocket a mirror, which he held
 “ before my face; I looked in it and

" saw (my blood now thrills as I re-
 " peat it), I saw myself wounded, and
 " bleeding profusely. Then I thought
 " myself in the house again; and sud-
 " denly heard these words, in accents so
 " distinct, that, for some time after I
 " awoke, I could scarcely believe them
 " ideal ' Depart this house, destruction
 " hovers here.'

" I was awakened by a footstep on
 " the stairs; it was my father retiring
 " to his chamber; the lateness of the hour
 " surprised me, for it was past mid-
 " night.

" On the following morning, the par-
 " ty of the preceding evening assembled
 " at breakfast, and were as gloomy and
 " silent as before. The table was spread
 " by a boy of my father's; but the cook
 " and the house-maid, whatever they
 " might be, were invisible.

" The next morning I was surprised,
 " on attempting to leave my chamber,
 " to

“ to find the door locked; I waited a
 “ considerable time before I ventured to
 “ call; when I did, no answer was re-
 “ turned; I then went to the window,
 “ and called more loudly, but my own
 “ voice was still the only sound I heard.
 “ Near an hour passed in a state of sur-
 “ prise and terror not to be described:
 “ at length I heard a person coming up
 “ stairs, and I renewed the call; I was
 “ answered, that my father had that
 “ morning set off for Paris, whence he
 “ would return in a few days; in the
 “ meanwhile he had ordered me to be
 “ confined in my chamber. On my ex-
 “ pressing surprise and apprehension at
 “ this circumstance, I was assured I had
 “ nothing to fear, and that I should live
 “ as well as if I was at liberty.

“ The latter part of this speech seem-
 “ ed to contain an odd kind of comfort;
 “ I made little reply, but submitted to
 “ necessity. Once more I was aban-

“ doned to sorrowful reflection ; what a
 “ a day was the one I now passed ! alone,
 “ and agitated with grief and apprehen-
 “ sion. I endeavoured to conjecture the
 “ cause of this harsh treatment ; and at
 “ length concluded it was designed by my
 “ father as a punishment for my former
 “ disobedience. But why abandon me
 “ to the power of strangers, to men
 “ whose countenances bore the stamp of
 “ villainy so strongly as to impress even
 “ my inexperienced mind with terror !
 “ Surmise involved me only deeper in
 “ perplexity, yet I found it impossible to
 “ forbear pursuing the subject ; and the
 “ day was divided between lamentation
 “ and conjecture. Night at length came,
 “ and such a night ! Darkness brought
 “ new terrors : I looked round the cham-
 “ ber for some means of fastening my
 “ door on the inside, but could perceive
 “ none ; at last I contrived to place the
 “ back

“ back of a chair in an oblique direction,
 “ so as to render it secure.

“ I had scarcely done this, and laid
 “ down upon my bed in my clothes,
 “ not to sleep, but to watch, when I
 “ heard a rap at the door of the house,
 “ which was opened and shut so quickly,
 “ that the person who had knocked
 “ seemed only to deliver a letter, or mes-
 “ sage. Soon after, I heard voices at
 “ intervals in a room below stairs, some-
 “ times speaking very low, and some-
 “ times rising all together, as if in dis-
 “ pute. Something more excusable than
 “ curiosity made me endeavour to dis-
 “ tinguish what was said, but in vain ;
 “ now and then a word or two reached
 “ me, and once I heard my name re-
 “ peated, but no more.

“ Thus passed the hours till midnight,
 “ when all became still. I had lain for
 “ some time in a state between fear and
 “ hope, when I heard the lock¹ of my

“ door gently moved backward and for-
 “ ward ; I started up, and listened ; for
 “ a moment it was still, then the noise
 “ returned, and I heard a whispering
 “ without ; my spirits died away, but I
 “ was yet sensible. Presently an effort
 “ was made at the door, as if to force it ;
 “ I shrieked aloud, and immediately
 “ heard the voices of the men I had seen
 “ at my father’s table : they called loud-
 “ ly for the door to be opened, and on
 “ my returning no answer, uttered dread-
 “ ful execrations. I had just strength
 “ sufficient to move to the window, in
 “ the desperate hope of escaping thence ;
 “ but my feeble efforts could not even
 “ shake the bars. O ! how can I recol-
 “ lect these moments of horror, and be
 “ sufficiently thankful that I am now in
 “ safety and comfort !

“ They remained some time at the
 “ door, then they quitted it, and went
 “ down stairs. How my heart revived

“ at

“ at every step of their departure ! I fell
 “ upon my knees, thanked God that he
 “ had preserved me this time, and im-
 “ plored his farther protection. I was
 “ rising from this short prayer, when
 “ suddenly I heard a noise in a different
 “ part of the room, and, on looking
 “ round, I perceived the door of a small
 “ closet open, and two men enter the
 “ chamber.

“ They seized me, and I sunk sense-
 “ less in their arms ; how long I remain-
 “ ed in this condition I know not, but,
 “ on reviving, I perceived myself again
 “ alone, and heard several voices from
 “ below stairs. I had presence of mind
 “ to run to the door of the closet, which
 “ afforded the only chance of escape ;
 “ but it was locked ! I then recollected
 “ it was possible, that the russians might
 “ have forgot to turn the key of the
 “ chamber door, which was held by the
 “ chair ; but here, also, I was disap-
 “ pointed.

“pointed. I clasped my hands in
 “an agony of despair, and stood for
 “some time immoveable.

“A violent noise from below roused
 “me, and soon after I heard people
 “ascending the stairs: I now gave my-
 “self up for lost. The steps approach-
 “ed, the door of the closet was again
 “unlocked. I stood calmly, and again
 “saw the men enter the chamber; I nei-
 “ther spoke, nor resisted: the faculties
 “of my soul were wrought up beyond
 “the power of feeling; as a violent blow
 “on the body stuns for a while the sense
 “of pain. They led me down stairs;
 “the door of a room below was thrown
 “open, and I beheld’ a stranger; it was
 “then that my senses returned; I shriek-
 “ed, and resisted, but was forced along.
 “It is unnecessary to say that this stranger
 “was Monsieur La Motte, or to add,
 “that I shall for ever bless him as my
 “deliverer.”

Adeline

Adeline ceased to speak; Madame La Motte remained silent. There were some circumstances in Adeline's narrative which raised all her curiosity. She asked if Adeline believed her father to be a party in this mysterious affair. Adeline, though it was impossible to doubt that he had been principally and materially concerned in some part of it, thought, or said she thought, he was innocent of any intention against her life. "Yet, what
 "motive," said Madame La Motte, "could there be for a degree of cruelty
 "so apparently unprofitable?" Here the inquiry ended; and Adeline confessed she had pursued it, till her mind shrunk from all farther research.

The sympathy which such uncommon misfortune excited, Madame La Motte now expressed without reserve, and this expression of it strengthened the bond of mutual friendship. Adeline felt her spirits relieved by the disclosure she had made

to

to Madame La Motte; and the latter acknowledged the value of the confidence, by an increase of affectionate attentions.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

“ ————— My May of life
“ Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf.”

MACBETH.

“ Full oft, unknowing and unknown,
“ He wore his endless noons alone,
“ Amid th' autumnal wood:
“ Oft was he wont, in hasty fit,
“ Abrupt the social board to quit.”

WARTON.

LA Motte had now passed above a month in this seclusion; and his wife had the pleasure to see him recover tranquillity, and even cheerfulness. In this pleasure Adeline warmly participated; and she might justly have congratulated herself, as one cause of his restoration; her cheerfulness and delicate attention had effected what Madame La Motte's greater anxiety had failed to accomplish. La Motte did not seem regardless of her amiable

amiable disposition, and sometimes thanked her in a manner more earnest than was usual with him. She, in her turn, considered him as her only protector, and now felt towards him the affection of a daughter.

The time she had spent in this peaceful retirement had softened the remembrance of past events, and restored her mind to its natural tone: and when memory brought back to her view her former short and romantic expectations of happiness, though she gave a sigh to the rapturous illusion, she less lamented the disappointment, than rejoiced in her present security and comfort.

But the satisfaction which La Motte's cheerfulness diffused around him was of short continuance; he became suddenly gloomy and reserved; the society of his family was no longer grateful to him; and he would spend whole hours in the most secluded parts of the forest, devoted to melancholy and secret grief. He did
not,

not, as formerly, indulge the humour of his sadness, without restraint, in the presence of others ; he now evidently endeavoured to conceal it, and affected a cheerfulness that was too artificial to escape detection.

His servant Peter, either impelled by curiosity or kindness, sometimes followed him, unseen, into the forest. He observed him frequently retire to one particular spot, in a remote part, which having gained, he always disappeared, before Peter, who was obliged to follow at a distance, could exactly notice where. All his endeavours, now prompted by wonder and invigorated by disappointment, were unsuccessful, and he was still compelled to endure the tortures of unsatisfied curiosity.

This change in the manners and habits of her husband was too conspicuous to pass unobserved by Madame La Motte, who endeavoured, by all the stratagems which affection could suggest, or female inven-

invention supply, to win him to her confidence. He seemed insensible to the influence of the first, and withstood the wiles of the latter. Finding all her efforts insufficient to dissipate the glooms which overhung his mind, or to penetrate their secret cause, she desisted from farther attempt, and endeavoured to submit to this mysterious distress.

Week after week elapsed, and the same unknown cause sealed the lips and corroded the heart of La Motte. The place of his visitation in the forest had not been traced. Peter had frequently examined round the spot where his master disappeared, but had never discovered any recess, which could be supposed to conceal him. The astonishment of the servant was at length raised to an insupportable degree, and he communicated to his mistress the subject of it.

The emotion, which this information excited, she disguised from Peter, and reproved him for the means he had taken
to

to gratify his curiosity. But she revolved this circumstance in her thoughts, and comparing it with the late alteration in his temper, her uneasiness was renewed, and her perplexity considerably increased. After much consideration, being unable to assign any other motive for his conduct, she began to attribute it to the influence of illicit passion; and her heart, which now outran her judgement, confirmed the supposition, and roused all the torturing pangs of jealousy.

Comparatively speaking, she had never known affliction till now: she had abandoned her dearest friends and connections—had relinquished the gaieties, the luxuries, and almost the necessities of life; fled with her family into exile, an exile the most dreary and comfortless; experiencing the evils of reality, and those of apprehension, united: all these she had patiently endured, supported by the affection of him, for whose sake she suffered. Though that affection, indeed,
had

had for some time appeared to be abated, she had borne its decrease with fortitude; but the last stroke of calamity, hitherto withheld, now came with irresistible force—the love, of which she lamented the loss, she now believed was transferred to another.

The operation of strong passion confuses the powers of reason, and warps them to its own particular direction. Her usual degree of judgement, unopposed by the influence of her heart, would probably have pointed out to Madame La Motte some circumstances upon the subject of her distress, equivocal, if not contradictory to her suspicions. No such circumstances appeared to her, and she did not long hesitate to decide, that Adeline was the object of her husband's attachment. Her beauty out of the question, who else, indeed, could it be in a spot thus secluded from the world?

The

The same cause destroyed, almost at the same moment, her only remaining comfort; and when she wept that she could no longer look for happiness in the affection of La Motte, she wept, also, that she could no longer seek solace in the friendship of Adeline. She had too great an esteem for her to doubt, at first, the integrity of her conduct; but, in spite of reason, her heart no longer expanded to her with its usual warmth of kindness. She shrunk from her confidence, and, as the secret broodings of jealousy cherished her suspicions, she became less kind to her, even in manner.

Adeline, observing the change, at first attributed it to accident, and afterwards to a temporary displeasure, arising from some little inadvertency in her conduct. She, therefore, increased her assiduities; but perceiving, contrary to all expectation, that her efforts to please failed of their usual consequence, and that the reserve of Madame's manner rather

ther increased than abated, she became seriously uneasy, and resolved to seek an explanation. This Madame La Motte assiduously avoided, and was for some time able to prevent. Adeline, however, too much interested in the event to yield to delicate scruples, pressed the subject so closely, that Madame was at first agitated and confused, but at length invented some idle excuse, and laughed off the affair.

She now saw the necessity of subduing all appearance of reserve towards Adeline; and though her heart could not conquer the prejudices of passion, it taught her to assume, with tolerable success, the aspect of kindness. Adeline was deceived, and was again at peace. Indeed, confidence in the sincerity and goodness of others was her weakness. But the pangs of stifled jealousy struck deeper to the heart of Madame La Motte, and she resolved, at all events, to obtain some certainty upon the subject of her suspicions.

She

She now condescended to an act of meanness, which she had before despised, and ordered Peter to watch the steps of his Master, in order to discover, if possible, the place of his visitation! So much did passion win upon her judgement, by time and indulgence, that she sometimes ventured even to doubt the integrity of Adeline, and afterwards proceeded to believe it possible that the object of La Motte's rambles might be an assignation with her. What suggested this conjecture was, that Adeline frequently took long walks alone in the forest, and sometimes was absent from the abbey for many hours. This circumstance, which Madame La Motte had at first attributed to Adeline's fondness for the picturesque beauties of nature, now operated forcibly upon her imagination, and she could view it in no other light, than as affording an opportunity for secret conversation with her husband.

VOL. I.

F

Peter

Peter obeyed the orders of his mistress with alacrity, for they were warmly seconded by his own curiosity. All his endeavours were, however, fruitless; he never dared to follow La Motte near enough to observe the place of his last retreat. Her impatience thus heightened by delay, and her passions stimulated by difficulty, Madame La Motte now resolved to apply to her husband for an explanation of his conduct.

After some consideration, concerning the manner most likely to succeed with him, she went to La Motte, but when she entered the room where he sat, forgetting all her concerted address, she fell at his feet, and was, for some moments, lost in tears. Surprised at her attitude and distress, he inquired the occasion of it, and was answered, that it was caused by his own conduct. “My conduct! What part of it, pray?” inquired he.

“Your

“Your reserve, your secret sorrow,
“and frequent absence from the abbey.”

“Is it then so wonderful, that a man,
“who has lost almost every thing, should
“sometimes lament his misfortunes? or
“so criminal to attempt concealing his
“grief, that he must be blamed for it
“by those whom he would save from
“the pain of sharing it?”

Having uttered these words, he quitted the room, leaving Madame La Motte lost in surprise, but somewhat relieved from the pressure of her former suspicions. Still, however, she pursued Adeline with an eye of scrutiny; and the mask of kindness would sometimes fall off, and discover the features of distrust. Adeline, without exactly knowing why, felt less at ease and less happy in her presence than formerly; her spirits drooped, and she would often, when alone, weep at the forlornness of her condition. Formerly, her remembrance of past sufferings was lost in the friendship of Madame

La Motte ; now, though her behaviour was too guarded to betray any striking instance of unkindness, there was something in her manner which chilled the hopes of Adeline, unable as she was to analyse it. But a circumstance which soon occurred, suspended, for a while, the jealousy of Madame La Motte, and roused her husband from his state of gloomy stupefaction.

Peter, having been one day to Auboigne, for the weekly supply of provisions, returned with intelligence that awakened in La Motte new apprehension and anxiety.

“ Oh, Sir ! I’ve heard something that “ has astonished me, as well it may,” cried Peter ; “ and so it will you, when “ you come to know it. As I was standing in the blacksmith’s shop, while “ the smith was driving a nail into the “ horse’s shoe—(by the bye, the horse “ lost it in an odd way, I’ll tell you, Sir, “ how it was)”——

“ Nay

“ Nay, prithee, leave it till another
“ time, and go on with your story.”

“ Why then, Sir, as I was standing
“ in the blacksmith’s shop, comes in a
“ man with a pipe in his mouth, and a
“ large pouch of tobacco in his hand”—

“ Well—what has the pipe to do
“ with the story?”

“ Nay, Sir, you put me out; I can’t
“ go on, unless you let me tell it my
“ own way. As I was saying—with a
“ pipe in his mouth—I think I was
“ there, your Honour?”

“ Yes, yes.”

“ He sets himself down on the bench,
“ and, taking the pipe from his mouth,
“ says to the blacksmith; Neighbour,
“ do you know any body of the name of
“ La Motte hereabouts?—Bless your
“ Honour, I turned all of a cold sweat
“ in a minute!—Is not your Honour
“ well, shall I fetch you any thing?”

“ No—but be brief in your narra-
“ tive.”

“La Motte! La Motte! said the
 “blacksmith, I think I’ve heard the
 “name.”—“Have you?” said I;
 “your’re cunning then, for there’s no
 “such person hereabouts, to my know-
 “ledge.”

“Fool!—why did you say that?”

“Because I did not want them to
 “know your Honour was here; and if
 “I had not managed very cleverly, they
 “would have found me out. There is
 “no such person hereabouts, to my
 “knowledge, says I.”—“Indeed! says
 “the blacksmith, you know more of
 “the neighbourhood than I do then.”—
 “Aye, says the man with the pipe,
 “that’s very true. How came you to
 “know so much of the neighbourhood?
 “I came here twenty-six years ago,
 “come next St. Michael, and you know
 “more than I do. How came you to
 “know so much!”

“With that he put his pipe in his
 “mouth, and gave a whiff full in my
 “face.

“ face. Lord! your Honour, I trem-
 “ bled from head to foot. Nay, as for
 “ that matter, says I, I don’t know more
 “ than other people; but I’m sure I
 “ never heard of such a man as that.”—
 “ Pray, says the blacksmith, staring me
 “ full in the face, an’t you the man that
 “ was inquiring some time since about
 “ Saint Clair’s Abbey?”——“ Well,
 “ what of that? says I; what does that
 “ prove?”——“ Why, they say, some-
 “ body lives in the abbey now, said the
 “ man, turning to the other; and, for
 “ aught I know, it may be this same La
 “ Motte.”——“ Aye, or for aught I
 “ know either, says the man with the
 “ pipe, getting up from the bench, and
 “ you know more of this than you’ll
 “ own. I’ll lay my life on’t, this Mon-
 “ sieur La Motte lives at the abbey.”—
 “ Aye, says I, you are out there, for
 “ he does not live at the abbey *now*.”

“ Confound your folly!” cried La

Motte; "but be quick—how did the
"matter end?"

"My Master does not live there *now*,
"said I."—"Oh! oh! said the man with
"the pipe, he is your Master, then?
"And pray how long has he left the
"abbey—and where does he live now"
"Hold, said I, not so fast—I know when
"to speak and when to hold my tongue
"——but who has been inquiring for
"him?"

"What! he expected somebody to
"inquire for him? says the man."——
"No, says I, he did not; but if he did,
"what does that prove?—that argues
"nothing. With that he looked at the
"blacksmith, and they went out of the
"shop together, leaving my horse's shoe
"undone. But I never minded that, for
"the moment they were gone, I mount-
"ed and rode away as fast as I could.
"But in my fright, your Honour, I for-
"got to take the round-about way, and
"so came straight home."

La

La Motte, extremely shocked at Peter's intelligence, made no other reply than by cursing his folly, and immediately went in search of Madame, who was walking with Adeline on the banks of the river. La Motte was too much agitated to soften his information by preface: "We are discovered!" said he, "the King's officers have been inquiring for me at Auboine, and Peter has blundered upon my ruin!" He then informed her of what Peter had related, and bade her prepare to quit the abbey.

"But whither can we fly?" said Madame La Motte, scarcely able to support herself.—"Any where!" said he, "to stay here is certain destruction. We must take refuge in Switzerland, I think. If any part of France would have concealed me, surely it had been this!"

"Alas, how we are persecuted!" rejoined Madame. "This spot is scarcely

“made comfortable, before we are
 “obliged to leave it, and go we know
 “not whither.”

“I wish we may not know whither,”
 replied La Motte; “that is the least
 “evil that threatens us. Let us escape
 “a prison, and I care not whither we
 “go. But return to the abbey imme-
 “diately, and pack up what moveables
 “you can.” A flood of tears came to
 the relief of Madame La Motte, and she
 hung upon Adeline’s arm, silent and
 trembling. Adeline, though she had no
 comfort to bestow, endeavoured to com-
 mand her feelings and appear composed.
 “Come,” said La Motte, “we waste
 “time; let us lament hereafter, but at
 “present prepare for flight. Exert a
 “little of that fortitude, which is so ne-
 “cessary for our preservation. Adeline
 “does not weep, yet her state is as
 “wretched as your own, for I know
 “not how long I shall be able to pro-
 “tect her.”

Notwith-

Notwithstanding her terror, this reproof touched the pride of Madame La Motte, who dried her tears, but disdained to reply, and looked at Adeline with a strong expression of displeasure. As they moved silently toward the abbey, Adeline asked La Motte if he was sure they were the King's officers who inquired for him.—“I cannot doubt it,” he replied; “who else could possibly inquire for me? Besides, the behaviour of the man, who mentioned my name, puts the matter beyond a question.”

“Perhaps not,” said Madame La Motte: “let us wait till morning ere we set off. We may then find it will be unnecessary to go.”

“We may, indeed; the King's officers would probably by that time have told us as much.” La Motte went to give orders to Peter.—“Set off in an hour,” said Peter: “Lord bless you, Master! only consider the coach

“ wheel: it would take me a day at
 “ least to mend it, for your Honour
 “ knows I never mended one in my
 “ life.”

This was a circumstance which La Motte had entirely overlooked. When they settled at the abbey, Peter had at first been too busy in repairing the apartments to remember the carriage, and afterwards, believing it would not quickly be wanted, he had neglected to do it. La Motte's temper now entirely forsook him, and with many execrations he ordered Peter to go to work immediately: but on searching for the materials formerly bought, they were no where to be found, and Peter at length remembered, though he was prudent enough to conceal this circumstance, that he had used the nails in repairing the abbey.

It was now, therefore, impossible to quit the forest that night, and La Motte had only to consider the most probable plan of concealment, should the officers
 of

of justice visit the ruin before the morning; a circumstance which the thoughtlessness of Peter, in returning from Auboine by the straight way, made not unlikely.

At first, indeed, it occurred to him, that though his family could not be removed, he might himself take one of the horses, and escape from the forest before night. But he thought there would still be some danger of detection in the towns through which he must pass, and he could not well bear the idea of leaving his family unprotected, without knowing when he could return to them, or whether he could direct them to follow him. La Motte was not a man of very vigorous resolution, and he was, perhaps, rather more willing to suffer in company than alone.

After much consideration, he recollected the trap-door of the closet belonging to the chambers above: it was invisible to the eye, and, whatever might be

be its direction, it would securely shelter *him*, at least, from discovery. Having deliberated farther upon the subject, he determined to explore the recess to which the stairs led, and thought it possible that, for a short time, his whole family might be concealed within it. There was little time between the suggestion of the plan and the execution of his purpose, for darkness was spreading around, and, in every murmur of the wind, he thought he heard the voices of his enemies.

He called for a light, and ascended alone to the chamber. When he came to the closet, it was some time before he could find the trap-door, so exactly did it correspond with the boards of the floor. At length he found and raised it. The chill damps of long-confined air rushed from the aperture, and he paused for a moment to let them pass, ere he descended. As he stood looking down the abyss, he recollected the report, which Peter had brought

brought concerning the abbey, and it gave him an uneasy sensation ; but this soon yielded to more pressing interests.

The stairs were steep, and in many places trembled beneath his weight. Having continued to descend for some time, his feet touched the ground, and he found himself in a narrow passage ; but as he turned to pursue it, the damp vapours curled round him and extinguished the light. He called aloud for Peter, but could make no body hear, and, after some time, he endeavoured to find his way up the stairs. In this, with difficulty, he succeeded, and, passing the chambers with cautious steps, descended the tower.

The security, which the place he had just quitted seemed to promise, was of too much importance to be slightly rejected, and he determined immediately to make another experiment with the light:—having now fixed it in a lanthorn, he descended a second time to the passage.

stage. The current of vapours occasioned by the opening of the trap-door was abated, and the fresh air thence admitted had begun to circulate; La Motte passed on unmolested.

The passage was of considerable length, and led him to a door, which was fastened. He placed the lanthorn at some distance, to avoid the current of air, and applied his strength to the door: it shook under his hands, but did not yield. Upon examining it more closely, he perceived the wood round the lock was decayed, probably by the damps, and this encouraged him to proceed. After some time it gave way to his effort, and he found himself in a square stone room.

He stood for some time to survey it. The walls, which were dripping with unwholesome dews, were entirely bare, and afforded not even a window. A small iron grate alone admitted the air. At the farther end, near a low recess, was another door. La Motte went towards it,

it, and, as he passed, looked into the recesses. Upon the ground within it stood a large chest, which he went forward to examine, and, lifting the lid, he saw the remains of a human skeleton. Horror struck upon his heart, and he involuntarily stepped back. During a pause of some moments, his first emotions subsided. That thrilling curiosity, which objects of terror often excite in the human mind, impelled him to take a second view of this dismal spectacle.

La Motte stood motionless as he gazed; the object before him seemed to confirm the report that some person had formerly been murdered in the abbey. At length he closed the chest, and advanced to the second door, which also was fastened, but the key was in the lock. He turned it with difficulty, and then found the door was held by two strong bolts. Having undrawn these, it disclosed a flight of steps, which he descended: they terminated in a chain of low vaults,
or

or rather cells, that, from the manner of their construction and present condition, seemed to have been coeval with the most ancient parts of the abbey. La Motte, in his then depressed state of mind, thought them the burial places of the monks, who formerly inhabited the pile above; but they were more calculated for places of penance for the living, than of rest for the dead.

Having reached the extremity of these cells, the way was again closed by a door. La Motte now hesitated whether he should attempt to proceed any farther. The present spot seemed to afford the security he sought. Here he might pass the night unmolested by apprehension of discovery, and it was most probable, that if the officers arrived in the night, and found the abbey vacated, they would quit it before morning, or, at least, before he could have any occasion to emerge from concealment. These considerations restored his mind to a state of greater

greater composure. His only immediate care was to bring his family, as soon as possible, to this place of security, lest the officers should come unawares upon them; and, while he stood thus musing, he blamed himself for delay.

But an irresistible desire of knowing to what this door led, arrested his steps, and he turned to open it: the door, however, was fastened, and, as he attempted to force it, he suddenly thought he heard a noise above. It now occurred to him, that the officers might already have arrived, and he quitted the cells with precipitation, intending to listen at the trap-door.

“ There, said he, I may wait in security, and perhaps hear something of what passes. My family will not be known, or, at least, not hurt, and their uneasiness on my account they must learn to endure.”

These were the arguments of La Motte, in which, it must be owned, selfish

ish prudence was more conspicuous than tender anxiety for his wife. He had by this time reached the bottom of the stairs, when, on looking up, he perceived the trap-door was left open, and ascending in haste to close it, he heard footsteps advancing through the chambers above. Before he could descend entirely out of sight, he again looked up, and perceived through the aperture the face of a man looking down upon him. "Master!" cried Peter:—La Motte was somewhat relieved at the sound of his voice, though angry that he had occasioned him so much terror.

"What brings you here, and what is the matter below?"

"Nothing, Sir, nothing's the matter; only my mistress sent me to see after your Honour."

"There's nobody there then," said La Motte, "setting his foot upon the step."

"Yes,

“ Yes, Sir, there is my mistress and
 “ Mademoiselle Adeline”—

“ Well—well,” said La Motte, briskly—“ go your ways, I am coming.”

He informed Madame La Motte where he had been, and of his intention to secrete himself, and deliberated upon the means of convincing the officers, should they arrive, that he had quitted the abbey. For this purpose, he ordered all the moveable furniture to be conveyed to the cells below. La Motte himself assisted in the business, and every hand was employed for dispatch. In a very short time, the habitable part of the fabric was left almost as desolate as he had found it. He then bade Peter take the horses to a distance from the abbey, and turn them loose. After farther consideration, he thought it might contribute to mislead the officers, if he placed in some conspicuous part of the fabric an inscription, signifying his condition, and mentioning the date of his departure
 from

from the abbey. Over the door of the tower, which led to the habitable part of the structure, he therefore cut the following lines :

O ye! whom misfortune may lead to this spot,
Learn that there are others as miserable as yourselves.

P—— L— M—— a wretched exile, sought within these walls a refuge from persecution, on the 27th of April 1658, and quitted them on the 12th of July in the same year, in search of a more convenient asylum.

After engraving these words with a knife, the small stock of provisions remaining from the week's supply (for Peter, in his fright, had returned unloaded from his last journey) was put into a basket, and La Motte having assembled his family, they all ascended the stairs of the tower, and passed through the chambers to the closet. Peter went first with a light, and with some difficulty found the trap-door. Madame La Motte shuddered

dered as she surveyed the gloomy abyss: but they were all silent.

La Motte now took the light and led the way; Madame followed, and then Adeline. "These old Monks loved good wine, as well as other people," said Peter, who brought up the rear: "I warrant your Honour, now, this was their cellar; I smell the casks already."

"Peace," said La Motte, "reserve your jokes for a proper occasion."

"There is no harm in loving good wine, as your Honour knows."

"Have done with this buffoonery," said La Motte, in a tone more authoritative, "and go first." Peter obeyed.

They came to the vaulted room. The dismal spectacle he had seen here deterred La Motte from passing the night in this chamber; and the furniture had, by his own order, been conveyed to the cells below. He was anxious that his family should not perceive the skeleton; an object which would, probably, excite a degree

degree of horror not to be overcome during their stay. La Motte now passed the chest in haste ; and Madame La Motte and Adeline were too much engrossed by their own thoughts, to give minute attention to external circumstances.

When they reached the cells, Madame La Motte wept at the necessity which condemned her to a spot so dismal. " Alas," said she, " are we indeed thus reduced ! The apartments above, formerly appeared to me a deplorable habitation ; but they are a palace compared to these."

" True, my dear," said La Motte, " and let the remembrance of what you once thought them, soothe your discontent now : these cells are also a palace, compared to the Bicetre, or the Bastile, and to the terrors of farther punishment, which would accompany them : let the apprehension of the greater evil teach you to endure the
" less

“ less; I am contented if we find here
 “ the refuge I seek.”

Madame La Motte was silent, and Adeline, forgetting her late unkindness, endeavoured as much as she could to console her; while her heart was sinking with the misfortunes, which she could not but anticipate, she appeared composed, and even cheerful. She attended Madame La Motte with the most watchful solicitude, and felt so thankful that La Motte was now secreted within this recess, that she almost lost all perception of its glooms and inconveniences.

This she artlessly expressed to him, who could not be insensible to the tenderness it discovered. Madame La Motte was also sensible of it, and it renewed a painful sensation. The effusions of gratitude she mistook for those of tenderness.

La Motte returned frequently to the trap-door, to listen if any body was in the abbey; but no sound disturbed the stillness of night; at length they sat down

to supper; the repast was a melancholy one. "If the officers do not come hither to night," said Madame La Motte, sighing, "suppose, my dear, Peter returns to Auboine to-morrow; he may there learn something more of this affair; or, at least, he might procure a carriage to convey us hence."

"To be sure he might," said La Motte, peevishly, "and people to attend it also. Peter would be an excellent person to shew the officers the way to the abbey, and to inform them of what they might else be in doubt about, my concealment here."

"How cruel is this irony!" replied Madame La Motte; "I proposed only what I thought would be for our mutual good; my judgement was, perhaps, wrong, but my intention was certainly right." Tears swelled into her eyes as she spoke these words. Adeline wished to console her; but delicacy kept her silent. La Motte observed the effect

effect of his speech, and something like remorse touched his heart. He approached, and taking his wife's hand, " You must allow for the perturbation of my mind," said he, " I did not mean to afflict you thus. The idea of sending Peter to Auboine, where he has already done so much harm by his blunders, teased me, and I could not let it pass unnoticed. No, my dear, our only chance of safety is to remain where we are while our provisions last. If the officers do not come here to-night, they probably will to-morrow, or, perhaps, the next day. When they have searched the abbey, without finding me, they will depart; we may then emerge from this recess, and take measures for removing to a distant country."

Madame La Motte acknowledged the justness of his remarks, and her mind being relieved by the little apology he had made, she became tolerably cheerful.

Supper being ended, La Motte stationed the faithful, though simple, Peter, at the foot of the steps that ascended to the closet, there to keep watch during the night. Having done this, he returned to the lower cells, where he had left his little family. The beds were spread, and having mournfully bade each other good night, they lay down, and implored rest.

Adeline's thoughts were too busy to suffer her to repose, and when she believed her companions were sunk in slumber, she indulged the sorrow which reflection brought. She also looked forward to the future with the most mournful apprehension. "Should La Motte be seized, what was to become of her? She would then be a wanderer in the wide world; without friends to protect, or money to support her; the prospect was gloomy—was terrible!" She surveyed it and shuddered! The distresses too of Monsieur and Madame La Motte,

Motte, whom she loved with the most lively affection, formed no inconsiderable part of her's.

Sometimes she looked back to her father; but in him she only saw an enemy, from whom she must fly: this remembrance heightened her sorrow; yet it was not the recollection of the suffering he had occasioned her, by which she was so much afflicted, as by the sense of his unkindness: she wept bitterly. At length, with that artless piety, which innocence only knows, she addressed the Supreme Being, and resigned herself to his care. Her mind then gradually became peaceful and re-assured, and soon after she sunk to repose.

CHAP. V.

A Surprise—An Adventure—A Mystery.

THE night passed without any alarm; Peter had remained upon his post, and heard nothing that prevented his sleeping. La Motte heard him, long before he saw him, most musically snoring; though it must be owned there was more of the bass, than of any other part of the gamut in his performance. He was soon roused by the *bravura* of La Motte, whose notes sounded discord to his ears, and destroyed the torpor of his tranquillity.

“God bless you, Master, what’s the matter?” cried Peter, waking; “are they come!”

“Yes, for aught you care, they might
“be

"be come. Did I place you here to
"sleep, firrah?"

"Bless you, Master," returned Peter,
"sleep is the only comfort to be had
"here; I'm sure I would not deny it to
"a dog in such a place as this."

La Motte sternly questioned him concerning any noise he might have heard in the night, and Peter full as solemnly protested he had heard none; an assertion which was strictly true, for he had enjoyed the comfort of being asleep the whole time.

La Motte then ascended to the trap-door and listened attentively. No sounds were heard, and, as he ventured to lift it, the full light of the sun burst upon his sight, the morning being now far advanced; he walked softly along the chambers, and looked through a window; no person was to be seen. Encouraged by his apparent security, he ventured down the stairs of the tower, and entered the first apartment. He was

proceeding towards the second, when, suddenly recollecting himself he first peeped through the crevice of the door, which stood half open. He looked, and distinctly saw a person sitting near the window, upon which his arm rested.

The discovery so much shocked him, that for a moment he lost all presence of mind, and was utterly unable to move from the spot. The person, whose back was towards him, arose, and turned his head. La Motte now recovered himself, and quitting the apartment as quickly, and, at the same time, as silently as possible, ascended to the closet. He raised the trap-door, but before he closed it, heard the footsteps of a person entering the outer chamber. Bolts, or other fastening to the trap, there were none; and his security depended solely upon the exact correspondence of the boards. The outer door of the stone-room had no means of defence; and the fastenings of the inner one were on the wrong side
to

to afford him security, even till some means of escape could be found.

When he reached this room, he paused, and heard distinctly persons walking in the closet above. While he was listening, he heard a voice call him by name, and he instantly fled to the cells below, expecting every moment to hear the trap lifted, and the footsteps of pursuit; but he was fled beyond the reach of hearing either. Having thrown himself on the ground, at the farthest extremity of the vaults, he lay for some time breathless with agitation. Madam La Motte and Adeline, in the utmost terror, inquired what had happened. It was some time before he could speak; when he did it was almost unnecessary, for the distant noises, which sounded from above, informed the family of a part of the truth.

The sounds did not seem to approach, but Madame La Motte, unable to command her terror, shrieked aloud: this re-

doubled the distress of La Motte.—
 “ You have destroyed me,” cried he ;
 “ that shriek has informed them where
 “ I am.” He traversed the cells with
 clasped hands and quick steps. Adeline
 stood pale and still as death, supporting
 Madame La Motte, whom, with diffi-
 culty, she prevented from fainting. “ O !
 “ Dupras ! Dupras ! you are already
 “ avenged !” said he, in a voice that
 seemed to burst from his heart : there
 was a pause of silence. “ But why
 “ should I deceive myself with a hope
 “ of escaping ?” he resumed, “ why do I
 “ wait here for their coming ? Let me
 “ rather end these torturing pangs by
 “ throwing myself into their hands at
 “ once.”

As he spoke, he moved towards the
 door, but the distress of Madame La
 Motte arrested his steps. “ Stay,” said
 she, “ for my sake, stay ; do not leave
 “ me thus, nor throw yourself volun-
 “ tarily upon destruction !”

“ Surely,

“Surely, Sir,” said Adeline, “you are too precipitate; this despair is useless, as it is ill-founded. We hear no person approaching; if the officers had discovered the trap-door they would certainly have been here before now.” The words of Adeline stilled the tumult of his mind: the agitation of terror subsided; and reason beamed a feeble ray upon his hopes. He listened attentively, and perceiving that all was silent, advanced with caution to the stone room, and thence to the foot of the stairs that led to the trap-door. It was closed; no sound was heard above.

He watched a long time, and the silence continuing, his hopes strengthened, and, at length he began to believe that the officers had quitted the abbey; the day, however, was spent in anxious watchfulness. He did not dare to uncloset the trap-door; and he frequently thought he heard distant noises. It was evident, however, that the secret of the

closet had escaped discovery; and on this circumstance he justly founded his security. The following night was passed, like the day, in trembling hope, and incessant watching.

But the necessities of hunger now threatened them. The provisions, which had been distributed with the nicest economy, were nearly exhausted, and the most deplorable consequences might be expected from their remaining longer in concealment. Thus circumstanced, La Motte deliberated upon the most prudent method of proceeding. There appeared no other alternative, than to send Peter to Auboine, the only town from which he could return within the time prescribed by their necessities. There was game, indeed, in the forest; but Peter could neither handle a gun, or use a fishing-rod to any advantage.

It was, therefore, agreed that he should go to Auboine for a supply of provisions, and at the same time bring materials for
mending

mending the coach wheel, that they might have some ready conveyance from the forest. La Motte forbade Peter to ask any questions concerning the people who had inquired for him, or take any methods for discovering whether they had quitted the country, lest his blunders should again betray him. He ordered him to be entirely silent as to these subjects, and to finish his business, and leave the place with all possible dispatch.

A difficulty yet remained to be overcome—Who should first venture abroad into the abbey, to learn whether it was vacated by the officers of justice? La Motte considered, that if he was again seen, he should be effectually betrayed; which could not be *so* certain, if one of his family was observed, for they were each unknown to the officers. It was necessary, however, that the person he sent should have courage enough to go through with the inquiry, and wit enough to conduct it with caution. Peter, perhaps,

haps, had the first; but was certainly destitute of the last. Annette had neither. La Motte looked at his wife, and asked her, if, for his sake, she dared to venture. Her heart shrunk from the proposal, yet she was unwilling to refuse, or appear indifferent upon a point so essential to the safety of her husband. Adeline observed in her countenance the agitation of her mind, and, surmounting the fears which had hitherto kept her silent, she offered herself to go.

“ They will be less likely to offend
 “ me,” said she, “ than a man.” Shame would not suffer La Motte to accept her offer; and Madame, touched by the magnanimity of her conduct, felt a momentary renewal of all her former kindness. Adeline pressed her proposal so warmly, and seemed so much in earnest, that La Motte began to hesitate. “ You,
 “ Sir,” said she, “ once preserved me
 “ from the most imminent danger, and
 “ your kindness has since protected me.

Do

“ Do not refuse me the satisfaction of
 “ deservng your goodness by a grate-
 “ ful return of it. Let me go into the
 “ abbey, and if, by so doing, I should
 “ preserve you from evil, I shall be suf-
 “ ficiently rewarded for what little dan-
 “ ger I may incur, for my pleasure will
 “ be at least equal to your’s.”

Madame La Motte could scarcely re-
 frain from tears as Adeline spoke ; and
 La Motte, sighing deeply, said, “ Well,
 “ be it so ; go, Adeline, and from this
 “ moment consider me as your debtor.”
 Adeline stayed not to reply, but taking
 a light, quitted the cells, La Motte
 following to raise the trap-door, and
 cautioning her to look, if possible, into
 every apartment, before she entered it.
 “ If you *should* be seen,” said he, “ you
 “ must account for your appearance so
 “ as not to discover me. Your own pre-
 “ fence of mind may assist you, I cannot.
 “ —God bless you!”

When

When she was gone, Madame La Motte's admiration of her conduct began to yield to other emotions. Distrust gradually undermined kindness, and jealousy raised suspicions. "It must be a sentiment more powerful than gratitude," thought she, "that could teach Adeline to subdue her fears. What, but love, could influence her to a conduct so generous!" Madame La Motte, when she found it impossible to account for Adeline's conduct, without alledging some interested motive for it, however her suspicions might agree with the practice of the world, had surely forgotten how much she once admired the purity and disinterestedness of her young friend.

Adeline, mean while, ascended to the chambers: the cheerful beams of the sun played once more upon her sight, and re-animated her spirits; she walked lightly through the apartments, nor stopped till she came to the stairs of the tower.

tower. Here she stood for some time, but no sounds met her ear, save the sighing of the wind among the trees, and, at length, she descended. She passed the apartments below, without seeing any person; and the little furniture that remained, seemed to stand exactly as she had left it. She now ventured to look out from the tower: the only animate objects that appeared were the deer, quietly grazing under the shade of the woods. Her favourite little fawn distinguished Adeline, and came bounding towards her with strong marks of joy. She was somewhat alarmed lest the animal, being observed, should betray her, and walked swiftly away through the cloisters.

She opened the door that led to the great hall of the abbey, but the passage was so gloomy and dark, that she feared to enter it, and started back. It was necessary, however, that she should examine farther, particularly on the opposite side of the ruin, of which she had hitherto
 had

had no view; but her fears returned when she recollected how far it would lead her from her only place of refuge, and how difficult it would be to retreat. She hesitated what to do; but when she recollected her obligations to La Motte, and considered this as, perhaps, her only opportunity of doing him a service, she determined to proceed.

As these thoughts passed rapidly over her mind, she raised her innocent looks to Heaven, and breathed a silent prayer. With trembling steps she proceeded over fragments of the ruin, looking anxiously around, and often starting as the breeze rustled among the trees, mistaking it for the whisperings of men. She came to the lawn which fronted the fabric, but no person was to be seen, and her spirits revived. The great door of the hall she now endeavoured to open, but suddenly remembering that it was fastened by La Motte's orders, she proceeded to the north-end of the abbey, and, having surveyed

veyed the prospect around, as far as the thick foliage of the trees would permit, without perceiving any person, she turned her steps to the tower from which she had issued.

Adeline was now light of heart, and returned with impatience to inform La Motte of his security. In the cloisters she was again met by her little favourite, and she stopped for a moment to caress it. The fawn seemed sensible to the sound of her voice, and discovered new joy; but while she spoke, it suddenly started from her hand, and looking up, she perceived the door of the passage, leading to the great hall, open, and a man in the habit of a soldier issue forth.

With the swiftness of an arrow she fled along the cloisters, nor once ventured to look back; but a voice called to her to stop, and she heard steps advancing quick in pursuit. Before she could reach the tower, her breath failed her, and she leaned against a pillar of the
the

the cloister, pale and exhausted. The man came up, and gazing at her with a strong expression of surprize and curiosity, he assumed a gentle manner, assured her she had nothing to fear, and inquired if she belonged to La Motte: observing that she still looked terrified and remained silent, he repeated his assurances and his question.

“ I know that he is concealed within the ruin,” said the stranger; “ the occasion of his concealment I also know; but it is of the utmost importance I should see him, and he will then be convinced that he has nothing to fear from me.” Adeline trembled so excessively, that it was with difficulty she could support herself—she hesitated, and knew not what to reply. Her manner seemed to confirm the suspicions of the stranger, and her consciousness of this increased her embarrassment: he took advantage of it to press her farther. Adeline, at length, replied, that “ La Motte had
“ some

“some time since resided at the abbey.”

“—And does still, Madam,” said the stranger; “lead me to where he may be found—I must see him, and—”

“Never, Sir,” replied Adeline, “and I solemnly assure you, it will be in vain to search for him.”

“That I must try,” resumed he, “since you, Madam, will not assist me. I have already followed him to some chambers above, where I suddenly lost him: thereabouts he must be concealed, and it’s plain, therefore, they afford some secret passage.”

Without waiting Adeline’s reply, he sprung to the door of the tower. She now thought it would betray a consciousness of the truth of his conjecture to follow him, and resolved to remain below. But, on farther consideration, it occurred to her, that he might steal silently into the closet, and possibly surprize La Motte at the door of the trap. She, therefore, hastened after him, that her
voice

voice might prevent the danger she apprehended. He was already in the second chamber, when she overtook him; she immediately began to speak aloud.

This room he searched with the most scrupulous care, but finding no private door, or other outlet, he proceeded to the closet: then it was, that it required all her fortitude to conceal her agitation. He continued the search. "Within these chambers I know he is concealed," said he, "though hitherto I have not been able to discover how. It was hither I followed a man, whom I believe to be him, and he could not escape without a passage; I shall not quit the place till I have found it."

He examined the walls and the boards, but without discovering the division of the floor, which, indeed, so exactly corresponded, that La Motte himself had not perceived it by the eye, but by the trembling of the floor beneath his feet. "Here is some mystery," said the stranger

ger, "which I cannot comprehend, and
 "perhaps never shall." He was turning
 to quit the closet, when, who can paint
 the distress of Adeline, upon seeing the
 trap-door gently raised, and La Motte
 himself appear. "Hah!" cried the
 stranger, advancing eagerly to him. La
 Motte sprang forward, and they were
 locked in each other's arms.

The astonishment of Adeline, for a
 moment, surpassed even her former dis-
 tress; but a remembrance darted across
 her mind, which explained the present
 scene, and, before La Motte could ex-
 claim, "My son!" she knew the stran-
 ger as such. Peter, who stood at the
 foot of the stairs and heard what passed
 above, flew to acquaint his mistress with
 the joyful discovery, and, in a few mo-
 ments, she was folded in the embrace of
 her son. This spot, so lately the mansion
 of despair, seemed metamorphosed into
 the palace of pleasure, and the walls
 echoed

echoed only to the accents of joy and congratulation.

The joy of Peter on this occasion was beyond expression: he acted a perfect pantomime—he capered about, clapped his hands—ran to his young master—shook him by the hand, in spite of the frowns of La Motte; ran every where, without knowing for what, and gave no rational answer to any thing that was said to him.

After their first emotions were subsided, La Motte, as if suddenly recollecting himself, resumed his wonted solemnity: “I am to blame,” said he, “thus to give way to joy, when I am still, perhaps, surrounded by danger. Let us secure a retreat while it is yet in our power,” continued he; “in a few hours the King’s officers may search for me again.”

Louis comprehended his father’s words, and immediately relieved his apprehensions by the following relation:

“A letter

“ A letter from Monsieur Nemours,
 “ containing an account of your flight
 “ from Paris, reached me at Peronne,
 “ where I was then upon duty with my
 “ regiment. He mentioned, that you
 “ was gone towards the south of France,
 “ but as he had not since heard from
 “ you, he was ignorant of the place of
 “ your refuge. It was about this time
 “ that I was dispatched into Flanders;
 “ and being unable to obtain farther in-
 “ telligence of you, I passed some weeks
 “ of very painful solicitude. At the
 “ conclusion of the campaign, I obtained
 “ leave of absence, and immediately set
 “ out for Paris, hoping to learn from
 “ Nemours, where you had found an
 “ asylum.

“ Of this, however, he was equally
 “ ignorant with myself. He informed
 “ me that you had once before written
 “ to him from D——, upon your second
 “ day’s journey from Paris, under an
 “ assumed name, as had been agreed

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H

“ upon;

“ upon; and that you then said, the fear
 “ of discovery would prevent your
 “ hazarding another letter: he, there-
 “ fore, remained ignorant of your
 “ abode, but said, he had no doubt you
 “ had continued your journey to the
 “ southward. Upon this slender infor-
 “ mation I quitted Paris in search of
 “ you, and proceeded immediately to
 “ V——, where my inquiries, concern-
 “ ing your farther progress, were suc-
 “ cessful as far as M——. There they
 “ told me you had staid some time, on
 “ account of the illness of a young lady;
 “ a circumstance which perplexed me
 “ much, as I could not imagine what
 “ young lady would accompany you. I
 “ proceeded, however, to L——; but
 “ there all traces of you seemed to be
 “ lost. As I sat musing at the window
 “ of the inn, I observed some scribbling
 “ on the glass, and the curiosity of idle-
 “ ness prompted me to read it. I thought
 “ I knew the characters, and the lines I
 “ read

“ read confirmed my conjecture, for I
 “ remembered to have heard you often
 “ repeat them.

“ Here I renewed my inquiries con-
 “ cerning your route, and at length I
 “ made the people of the inn recollect
 “ you, and traced you as far as Auboine.
 “ There I again lost you, till, upon my re-
 “ turn from a fruitless inquiry in the
 “ neighbourhood, the landlord of the little
 “ inn where I lodged told me he believed
 “ he had heard news of you, and immedi-
 “ ately recounted what had happened at a
 “ blacksmith’s shop a few hours before.

“ His description of Peter was so
 “ exact, that I had not a doubt it was
 “ you who inhabited the abbey; and,
 “ as I knew your necessity for conceal-
 “ ment, Peter’s denial did not shake my
 “ confidence. The next morning, with
 “ the assistance of my landlord, I found
 “ my way hither, and, having searched
 “ every visible part of the fabric, I
 “ began to credit Peter’s assertion: your

“ appearance, however, destroyed this
 “ fear, by proving that the place was still
 “ inhabited, for you disappeared so in-
 “ stantaneously, that I was not certain it
 “ was you whom I had seen. I continued
 “ seeking you till near the close of day,
 “ and till then scarcely quitted the cham-
 “ bers whence you had disappeared. I
 “ called on you repeatedly, believing that
 “ my voice might convince you of your
 “ mistake. At length I retired, to pass
 “ the night at a cottage near the border
 “ of the forest.

“ I came early this morning to renew
 “ my inquiries, and hoped that, believ-
 “ ing yourself safe, you would emerge
 “ from concealment. But how was I
 “ disappointed to find the abbey as silent
 “ and solitary as I had left it the pre-
 “ ceding evening ! I was returning once
 “ more from the great hall, when the
 “ voice of this young lady caught my
 “ ear, and effected the discovery I had so
 “ anxiously sought.”

This

This little narrative entirely dissipated the first apprehensions of La Motte; but he now dreaded that the inquiries of his son, and his own obvious desire of concealment, might excite a curiosity amongst the people of Aubeine, and lead to a discovery of his true circumstances. However, for the present he determined to dismiss all painful thoughts, and endeavour to enjoy the comfort which the presence of his son had brought him. The furniture was removed to a more habitable part of the abbey, and the cells were again abandoned to their own glooms.

The arrival of her son seemed to have animated Madame La Motte with new life, and all her afflictions were, for the present, absorbed in joy. She often gazed silently on him with a mother's fondness, and her partiality heightened every improvement which time had wrought in his person and manner. He was now in his twenty-third year; his person was manly, and his air military;

his manners were unaffected and graceful, rather than dignified; and though his features were irregular, they composed a countenance, which, having seen it once, you would seek again.

She made eager inquiries after the friends she had left at Paris, and learned, that, within the few months of her absence, some had died, and others quitted the place. La Motte also learned, that a very strenuous search for him had been prosecuted at Paris; and, though this intelligence was only what he had before expected, it shocked him so much, that he now declared it would be expedient to remove to a distant country. Louis did not scruple to say, that he thought he would be as safe at the abbey as at any other place; and repeated what Nemours had said, that the King's officers had been unable to trace any part of his route from Paris.

“ Besides,” resumed Louis, “ this abbey
 “ is protected by a supernatural power,
 “ and

“and none of the country people dare approach it.”

“Please you, my young master,” said Peter, who was waiting in the room, “we were frightened enough the first night we came here, and I, myself, God forgive me! thought the place was inhabited by devils, but they were only owls, and such like, after all.”

“Your opinion was not asked,” said La Motte; “learn to be silent.”

Peter was abashed. When he had quitted the room, La Motte asked his son, with seeming carelessness, what were the reports circulated by the country people! “O! Sir,” replied Louis, “I cannot recollect half of them. I remember, however, they said, that, many years ago, a person (but nobody had ever seen him, so we may judge how far the report ought to be credited) was privately brought to this abbey, and confined in some part of it, and

“that there were strong reasons to believe he came unfairly to his end.”

La Motte sighed. “They farther said,” continued Louis, “that the spectre of the deceased had ever since watched nightly among the ruins: and to make the story more wonderful, for the marvellous is the delight of the vulgar, they added, that there was a certain part of the ruin, from whence no person that had dared to explore it had ever returned. Thus people, who have few objects of real interest to engage their thoughts, conjure up for themselves imaginary ones.”

La Motte sat musing. “And what were the reasons,” said he, at length awaking from his reverie, “they pretended to assign, for believing the person confined here was murdered?”

“They did not use a term so positive as that,” replied Louis.

“True,” said La Motte, recollecting himself,

himself, "they only said he came un-
"fairly to his end."

"That is a nice distinction," said
Adeline.

"Why, I could not well compre-
"hend what these reasons were," re-
sumed Louis; "the people, indeed,
"say, that the person, who was brought
"here, was never known to depart, but
"I do not find it certain that he ever ar-
"rived; that there was strange privacy
"and mystery observed, while he was
"here, and that the abbey has never since
"been inhabited by its owner. There
"seems, however, to be nothing in all this
"that deserves to be remembered." La
Motte raised his head, as if to reply, when
the entrance of Madame turned the dis-
course upon a new subject, and it was not
resumed that day.

Peter was now dispatched for provi-
sions, while La Motte and Louis retired
to consider how far it was safe for them to
continue at the abbey. La Motte, not-

withstanding the assurances lately given him, could not but think that Peter's blunders, and his son's inquiries, might lead to a discovery of his residence. He revolved this in his mind for some time, but at length a thought struck him, that the latter of these circumstances might considerably contribute to his security. "If you," said he to Louis, "return to the inn at Auboine, from whence you were directed here, and, without seeming to intend giving intelligence, *do* give the landlord an account of your having found the abbey uninhabited, and then add, that you had discovered the residence of the person you sought in some distant town, it would suppress any reports that may at present exist, and prevent the belief of any in future. And if, after all this, you can trust yourself for presence of mind and command of countenance, so far as to describe some dreadful apparition, I think these circumstances,

“stances, together with the distance of
 “the abbey, and the intricacies of the
 “forest, could entitle me to consider this
 “place as my castle.”

Louis agreed to all that his father had proposed, and on the following day executed his commission with such success, that the tranquillity of the abbey may be then said to have been entirely restored.

Thus ended this adventure, the only one that had occurred to disturb the family, during their residence in the forest. Adeline, removed from the apprehension of those evils with which the late situation of La Motte had threatened her, and from the depression which her interest in him occasioned her, now experienced a more than usual complacency of mind. She thought, too, that she observed in Madame La Motte a renewal of her former kindness, and this circumstance awakened all her gratitude, and imparted to her a pleasure as lively as it was innocent.

The satisfaction with which the presence of her son inspired Madame La Motte, Adeline mistook for kindness to herself, and she exerted her whole attention in an endeavour to become worthy of it.

But the joy which his unexpected arrival had given to La Motte quickly began to evaporate, and the gloom of despondency again settled on his countenance. He returned frequently to his haunt in the forest—the same mysterious sadness tinged his manner, and revived the anxiety of Madame La Motte, who was resolved to acquaint her son with this subject of distress, and solicit his assistance to discover its source.

Her jealousy of Adeline, however, she could not communicate, though it again tormented her, and taught her to misconstrue with wonderful ingenuity every look and word of La Motte, and often to mistake the artless expressions of Adeline's gratitude and regard, for those of warmer tenderness. Adeline
had

had formerly accustomed herself to long walks in the forest, and the design Madame had formed of watching her steps, had been frustrated by the late circumstances, and was now entirely overcome by her sense of its difficulty and danger. To employ Peter in the affair, would be to acquaint him with her fears, and to follow her herself, would most probably betray her scheme, by making Adeline aware of her jealousy. Being thus restrained by pride and delicacy, she was obliged to endure the pangs of uncertainty concerning the greatest part of her suspicions.

To Louis, however, she related the mysterious change in his father's temper. He listened to her account with very earnest attention, and the surprize and concern impressed upon his countenance spoke how much his heart was interested. He was, however, involved in equal perplexity with herself upon this subject, and readily undertook to observe

observe the motions of La Motte, believing his interference likely to be of equal service both to his father and his mother. He saw, in some degree, the suspicions of his mother, but as he thought she wished to disguise her feelings, he suffered her to believe that she succeeded.

He now inquired concerning Adeline, and listened to her little history, of which his mother gave a brief relation, with great apparent interest. So much pity did he express for her condition, and so much indignation at the unnatural conduct of her father, that the apprehensions which Madame La Motte began to form of his having discovered her jealousy, yielded to those of a different kind. She perceived that the beauty of Adeline had already fascinated his imagination, and she feared that her amiable manners would soon impress his heart. Had her first fondness for Adeline continued, she would still have looked with displeasure
upon

upon their attachment, as an obstacle to the promotion and the fortune she hoped to see one day enjoyed by her son. On these she rested all her future hopes of prosperity, and regarded the matrimonial alliance which he might form as the only means of extricating his family from their present difficulties. She, therefore, touched lightly upon Adeline's merit, coolly joined with Louis in compassionating her misfortunes, and, with her censure of the father's conduct, mixed an implied suspicion of that of Adeline's. The means she employed to repress the passions of her son, had a contrary effect. The indifference, which she expressed towards Adeline, increased his pity for her destitute condition, and the tenderness, with which she affected to judge the father, heightened his honest indignation at his character.

As he quitted Madame La Motte, he saw his father cross the lawn and enter the deep shade of the forest on the left.

He

He judged this to be a good opportunity of commencing his plan, and, quitting the abbey, slowly followed at a distance. La Motte continued to walk straight forward, and seemed so deeply wrapt in thought, that he looked neither to the right or left, and scarcely lifted his head from the ground. Louis had followed him near half a mile, when he saw him suddenly strike into an avenue of the forest, which took a different direction from the way he had hitherto gone. He quickened his steps that he might not lose sight of him, but, having reached the avenue, found the trees so thickly interwoven, that La Motte was already hid from his view.

He continued, however, to pursue the way before him : it conducted him through the most gloomy part of the forest he had yet seen, till at length it terminated in an obscure recess, over-arched with high trees, whose interwoven branches excluded the direct rays
of

of the sun, and admitted only a sort of solemn twilight. Louis looked around in search of La Motte, but he was nowhere to be seen. While he stood surveying the place, and considering what farther should be done, he observed, through the gloom, an object at some distance, but the deep shadow that fell around prevented his distinguishing what it was.

On advancing he perceived the ruins of a small building, which, from the traces that remained, appeared to have been a tomb. As he gazed upon it, "Here," said he, "are probably deposited the ashes of some ancient monk, once an inhabitant of the abbey; perhaps, of the founder, who, after having spent a life of abstinence and prayer, sought in heaven the reward of his forbearance upon earth. Peace be to his soul! But did he think a life of mere negative virtue deserved an eternal reward? Mistaken man! reason, "
" had

“ had you trusted to its dictates, would
 “ have informed you, that the active
 “ virtues, the adherence to the golden
 “ rule, ‘ Do as you would be done unto,’
 “ could alone deserve the favour of a
 “ Deity, whose glory is benevolence.”

He remained with his eyes fixed upon the spot, and presently saw a figure arise under the arch of the sepulchre. It started, as if on perceiving him, and immediately disappeared. Louis, though unused to fear, felt at that moment an uneasy sensation, but it almost immediately struck him that this was La Motte himself. He advanced to the ruin and called him. No answer was returned, and he repeated the call, but all was yet still as the grave. He then went up to the arch-way and endeavoured to examine the place where he had disappeared, but the shadowy obscurity rendered the attempt fruitless. He observed, however, a little to the right, an entrance to the ruin, and advanced some steps
 down

down a dark kind of passage, when, recollecting that this place might be the haunt of banditti, his danger alarmed him, and he retreated with precipitation.

He walked towards the abbey by the way he came, and finding no person followed him, and believing himself again in safety, his former surmise returned, and he thought it was La Motte he had seen. He mused upon this strange possibility, and endeavoured to assign a reason for so mysterious a conduct, but in vain. Notwithstanding this, his belief of it strengthened, and he entered the abbey under as full a conviction as the circumstances would admit of, that it was his father who had appeared in the sepulchre. On entering what was now used as a parlour, he was much surprised to find him quietly seated there with Madame La Motte and Adeline, and conversing as if he had been returned some time.

He took the first opportunity of acquainting

quainting his mother with the late adventure, and of inquiring how long La Motte had been returned before him, when learning that it was near half an hour, his surprise increased, and he knew not what to conclude.

Meanwhile, a perception of the growing partiality of Louis co-operated with the canker of suspicion, to destroy in Madame La Motte that affection which pity and esteem had formerly excited for Adeline. Her unkindness was now too obvious to escape the notice of her to whom it was directed, and, being noticed, it occasioned an anguish which Adeline found it very difficult to endure. With the warmth and candour of youth, she sought an explanation of this change of behaviour, and an opportunity of exculpating herself from any intention of provoking it. But this Madame La Motte artfully evaded, while at the same time she threw out hints, that involved Adeline in deeper

deeper perplexity, and served to make her present affliction more intolerable,

“ I have lost that affection,” she would say, “ which was my all. It was my “ only comfort—yet I have lost it—and “ this without even knowing my offence. “ But I am thankful I have not merited “ unkindness, and, though *she* has abandoned *me*, I shall always love *her*.”

Thus distressed, she would frequently leave the parlour, and, retiring to her chamber, would yield to a despondency, which she had never known till now.

One morning, being unable to sleep, she arose at a very early hour. The faint light of day now trembled through the clouds, and, gradually spreading from the horizon, announced the rising sun. Every feature of the landscape was slowly unveiled, moist with the dews of night, and brightening with the dawn, till at length the sun appeared, and shed the full flood of day. The beauty of the hour invited her to walk, and she went forth into the

the forest to taste the sweets of morning. The carols of new-waked birds saluted her as she passed, and the fresh gale came scented with the breath of flowers, whose tints glowed more vivid through the dew-drops that hung on their leaves.

She wandered on without noticing the distance, and, following the windings of the river, came to a dewy glade, whose woods, sweeping down to the very edge of the water, formed a scene so sweetly romantic, that she seated herself at the foot of a tree, to contemplate its beauty. These images insensibly soothed her sorrow, and inspired her with that soft and pleasing melancholy, so dear to the feeling mind. For some time she sat lost in a reverie, while the flowers that grew on the banks beside her, seemed to smile in new life, and drew from her a comparison with her own condition. She mused and sighed, and then, in a voice whose charming melody was modulated by the tenderness of her heart, she sung the following words:

SON-

S O N N E T.

TO THE LILY.

Soft silken flow'r! that in the dewy vale
 Unfolds thy modest beauties to the morn,
 And breath'st thy fragrance on her wand'ring gale,
 O'er earth's green hills and shadowy vallies borne:

When day has clos'd his dazzling eye,
 And dying gales sink soft away;
 When eve steals down the western sky,
 And mountains, woods, and vales decay:

Thy tender cups, that graceful swell,
 Droop sad beneath her chilly dews;
 Thy odours seek their silken cell,
 And twilight veils thy languid hues.

But soon, fair flow'r! the morn shall rise,
 And rear again thy pensive head;
 Again unveil thy snowy dyes,
 Again thy velvet foliage spread.

Sweet child of Spring! like thee, in Sorrow's shade,
 Full oft I mourn in tears, and droop forlorn:
 And, O! like thine, may light my gloom pervade,
 And Sorrow fly before Joy's living morn!

A dif-

A distant echo lengthened out her tones, and she sat listening to the soft response, till, repeating the last stanza of the Sonnet, she was answered by a voice almost as tender, and less distant. She looked round in surprise, and saw a young man, in a hunter's dress, leaning against a tree, and gazing on her with that deep attention which marks an enamoured mind.

A thousand apprehensions shot athwart her busy thought; and she now first remembered her distance from the abbey. She rose in haste to be gone, when the stranger respectfully advanced; but observing her timid looks and retiring steps, he paused. She pursued her way towards the abbey; and, though many reasons made her anxious to know whether she was followed, delicacy forbade her to look back. When she reached the abbey, finding the family was not yet assembled to breakfast, she retired to her chamber, where her whole thoughts were
employed

employed in conjectures concerning the stranger ; believing that she was interested on this point, no farther than as it concerned the safety of La Motte, she indulged, without scruple, the remembrance of that dignified air and manner which so much distinguished the youth she had seen. After revolving the circumstance more deeply, she believed it impossible that a person of his appearance should be engaged in a stratagem to betray a fellow creature ; and though she was destitute of a single circumstance that might assist her surmises of who he was, or what was his business in an unfrequented forest, she rejected, unconsciously, every suspicion injurious to his character. Upon farther deliberation, therefore, she resolved not to mention this little circumstance to La Motte, well knowing, that though his danger might be imaginary, his apprehensions would be real, and would renew all the sufferings and perplexity, from which

he was but just released. She resolved, however, to refrain, for some time, walking in the forest.

When she came down to breakfast she observed Madame La Motte to be more than usually reserved. La Motte entered the room soon after her, and made some trifling observation on the weather; and, having endeavoured to support an effort at cheerfulness, sunk into his usual melancholy. Adeline watched the countenance of Madame with anxiety; and when there appeared in it a gleam of kindness, it was as sunshine to her soul; but she very seldom suffered Adeline thus to flatter herself. Her conversation was restrained, and often pointed at something more than could be understood. The entrance of Louis was a very seasonable relief to Adeline, who almost feared to trust her voice with a sentence, lest its trembling accents should betray her uneasiness.

“ This

“ This charming morning drew you
“ early from your chamber,” said Louis,
addressing Adeline. — “ You had, no
“ doubt, a pleasant companion too,” said
Madame La Motte, “ a solitary walk is
“ seldom agreeable.”

“ I was alone, Madam,” replied Ade-
line.

“ Indeed! your own thoughts must be
“ highly pleasing then.”

“ Alas!” returned Adeline, a tear,
spite of her efforts, starting to her eye,
“ there are now few subjects of pleasure
“ left for them.”

“ That is very surprising,” pursued
Madame La Motte.

“ Is it, indeed, surprising, Madam,
“ for those who have lost their last friend
“ to be unhappy?”

Madame La Motte’s conscience ac-
knowledged the rebuke, and she blushed.
“ Well,” resumed she, after a short pause,
“ that is not your situation, Adeline;”
looking earnestly at La Motte. Ade-

line, whose innocence protected her from suspicion, did not regard this circumstance; but, smiling through her tears, said, "She rejoiced to hear her say so." During this conversation, La Motte had remained absorbed in his own thoughts; and Louis, unable to guess at what it pointed, looked alternately at his mother and Adeline for an explanation. The latter he regarded with an expression so full of tender compassion, that it revealed at once to Madame La Motte the sentiments of his soul; and she immediately replied to the last words of Adeline with a very serious air: "A friend
 " is only estimable when our conduct
 " deserves one; the friendship that sur-
 " vives the merit of its object, is a dis-
 " grace, instead of an honour, to both
 " parties."

The manner and emphasis with which she delivered these words, again alarmed Adeline, who mildly said, "She
 " hoped she should never deserve such
 " censure."

"censure." Madame was silent; but Adeline was so much shocked by what had already passed, that tears sprung from her eyes, and she hid her face with her handkerchief.

Louis now rose with some emotion; and La Motte, roused from his reverie, inquired what was the matter; but, before he could receive an answer, he seemed to have forgot that he had asked a question. "Adeline may give you her own account," said Madame La Motte.—"I have not deserved this," said Adeline, rising; "but since my presence is displeasing, I will retire."

She moved towards the door, when Louis, who was pacing the room in apparent agitation, gently took her hand, saying, "Here is some unhappy mistake," and would have led her to her seat; but her spirits were too much depressed to endure longer restraint; and, withdrawing her hand, "Suffer me to go," said she; "if there is any mis-

“ take, I am unable to explain it.”—
Saying this, she quitted the room. Louis
followed her with his eyes to the door;
when, turning to his mother, “ Surely,
“ Madam,” said he, “ you are to blame:
“ my life on it, she deserves your
“ warmest tenderness.”

“ You are very eloquent in her cause,
“ Sir,” said Madame, “ may I presume
“ to ask what has interested you thus in
“ her favour ? ”

“ Her own amiable manners,” rejoined
Louis, “ which no one can observe
“ without esteeming them.”

“ But you may presume too much on
“ your own observations; it is possible
“ these amiable manners may deceive
“ you.”

“ Your pardon, Madam; I may, with-
“ out presumption, affirm they cannot
“ deceive me.”

“ You have, no doubt, good reasons
“ for this assertion; and I perceive, by
“ your admiration of this artless *innocent*,
“ she

“ she has succeeded in her design of en-
 “ trapping your heart.”

“ Without designing it, she has won
 “ my admiration, which would not have
 “ been the case, had she been capable
 “ of the conduct you mention.”

Madame La Motte was going to re-
 ply, but was prevented by her husband,
 who, again roused from his reverie, in-
 quired into the cause of dispute: “ Away
 “ with this ridiculous behaviour,” said
 he, in a voice of displeasure. “ Ade-
 “ line has omitted some household duty,
 “ I suppose, and an offence so heinous
 “ deserves severe punishment, no doubt;
 “ but let me be no more disturbed with
 “ your petty quarrels; if you must be
 “ tyrannical, Madam, indulge your hu-
 “ mour in private.”

Saying this, he abruptly quitted the
 room, and Louis immediately following,
 Madame was left to her own unpleasant
 reflections. Her ill-humour proceeded
 from the usual cause. She had heard of

Adeline's walk; and La Motte having gone forth into the forest at an early hour, her imagination, heated by the broodings of jealousy, suggested that they had appointed a meeting. This was confirmed to her by the entrance of Adeline, quickly followed by La Motte; and her perceptions thus jaundiced by passion, neither the presence of her son, nor her usual attention to good manners, had been able to restrain her emotions. The behaviour of Adeline, in the late scene, she considered as a refined piece of art; and the indifference of La Motte as affected. So true it is, that

“ Trifles, light as air,

“ Are to the jealous confirmations strong,

“ As proof of Holy Writ.”

And so ingenious was she “ to twist the
“ true cause the wrong way.”

Adeline had retired to her chamber to weep. When her first agitation was subsided, she took an ample review of her conduct; and perceiving nothing of which she could accuse herself, she became

came more satisfied, deriving her best comfort from the integrity of her intentions. In the moment of accusation, innocence may sometimes be oppressed with the punishment due only to guilt; but reflection dissolves the illusions of terror, and brings to the aching bosom the consolations of virtue.

When La Motte quitted the room, he had gone into the forest, which Louis observing, he followed and joined him, with an intention of touching upon the subject of his melancholy. "It is a fine morning, Sir," said Louis, "if you will give me leave, I will walk with you." La Motte, though dissatisfied, did not object; and after they had proceeded some way, he changed the course of his walk, striking into a path, contrary to that which Louis had observed him take on the foregoing day.

Louis remarked, that the avenue they had quitted was "more shady, and, therefore, more pleasant." La Motte not

seeming to notice this remark, "It leads
 "to a singular spot," continued he,
 "which I discovered yesterday." La
 Motte raised his head; Louis proceeded
 to describe the tomb, and the adventure
 he had met with; during his relation
 La Motte regarded him with earnest at-
 tention, while his own countenance suf-
 fered various changes. When he had
 concluded, "You were very daring,"
 said La Motte, "to examine that place,
 "particularly when you ventured down
 "the passage; I would advise you to be
 "more cautious how you penetrate the
 "depths of this forest. I, myself, have
 "not ventured beyond a certain boun-
 "dary; and am, therefore, uninformed
 "what inhabitants it may harbour. Your
 "account has alarmed me," continued
 he, "for if banditti are in the neigh-
 "bourhood, I am not safe from their
 "depredations: 'tis true, I have but lit-
 "tle to lose, except my life."

"And the lives of your family,"
 rejoined

rejoined Louis.—“Of course,” said La Motte.

“It would be well to have more certainty upon that head,” rejoined Louis ;
 “I am considering how we may obtain it.”

“’Tis useless to consider that,” said La Motte, “the inquiry itself brings danger with it ; your life would, perhaps, be paid for the indulgence of your curiosity ; our only chance of safety is by endeavouring to remain undiscovered. Let us move towards the abbey.”

Louis knew not what to think, but said no more upon the subject. La Motte soon after relapsed into a fit of musing ; and his son now took occasion to lament that depression of spirits, which he had lately observed in him. “Rather lament the cause of it,” said La Motte with a sigh.—“That I do most sincerely whatever it may be. May I venture to inquire, Sir, what is the cause?”

“ Are, then, my misfortunes so little
 “ known to you,” rejoined La Motte,
 “ as to make that question necessary?
 “ Am I not driven from my home, from
 “ my friends, and almost from my coun-
 “ try, and shall it be asked why I am
 “ afflicted ?”—Louis felt the justice of
 this reproof, and was a moment silent :
 “ That you are afflicted, Sir, does not
 “ excite my surprise ;” resumed he, “ it
 “ would, indeed, be strange, were you
 “ not.”

“ What then does excite your sur-
 “ prise ?”

“ The air of cheerfulness you wore
 “ when I first came hither.”

“ You lately lamented that I was
 “ afflicted,” said La Motte, “ and now
 “ seem not very well pleased that I once
 “ was cheerful. What is the meaning
 “ of this ?”

“ You much mistake me,” said his son,
 “ nothing could give me so much satisf-
 “ faction as to see that cheerfulness re-
 “ newed ;

“newed ; the same cause of sorrow
“existed at that time, yet you was then
“cheerful.”

“That I was then cheerful,” said La Motte, “you might, without flattery, have attributed to yourself ; your presence revived me, and I was relieved at the same time from a load of apprehension.”

“Why, then, since the same cause exists, are you not still cheerful ?”

“And why do you not recollect that it is your father you thus speak to ?”

“I do, Sir, and nothing but anxiety for my father could have urged me thus far : it is with inexpressible concern I perceive you have some secret cause of uneasiness ; reveal it, Sir, to those who claim a share in all your affliction, and suffer them, by participation, to soften its severity.” Louis looked up, and observed the countenance of his father pale as death : his lips trembled while he spoke. “Your penetration,

“netration, however you may rely upon
 “it, has, in the present instance, deceived
 “you. I have no subject of distress, but
 “what you are already acquainted with,
 “and I desire this conversation may ne-
 “ver be renewed.”

“If it is your desire, of course, I
 “obey,” said Louis; “but, pardon
 “me, Sir, if——”

“I will *not* pardon you, Sir,” interrupted La Motte, “let the discourse
 “end here.” Saying this, he quickened
 his steps, and Louis, not daring to pursue,
 walked quietly on till he reached the
 abbey.

Adeline passed the greatest part of the
 day alone in her chamber, where, having
 examined her conduct, she endeavoured
 to fortify her heart against the unmerited
 displeasure of Madame La Motte. This
 was a task more difficult than that of
 self-acquittance. She loved her, and had
 relied on her friendship, which, notwith-
 standing the conduct of Madame, still ap-
 peared

peared valuable. It was true, she had not deserved to lose it, but Madame was so averse to explanation, that there was little probability of recovering it, however ill-founded might be the cause of her dislike. At length, she reasoned, or rather, perhaps, persuaded herself into tolerable composure; for to resign a real good with contentment, is less an effort of reason than of temper.

For many hours she busied herself upon a piece of work, which she had undertaken for Madame La Motte; and this she did, without the least intention of conciliating her favour, but because she felt there was something in thus repaying unkindness, which was suitable to her own temper, her sentiments, and her pride. Self-love *may* be the center round which the human affections move, for whatever motive conduces to self-gratification may be resolved into self-love; yet some of these affections are in their nature so refined—that though we cannot deny their

their origin, they almost deserve the name of virtue. Of this species was that of Adeline.

In this employment, and in reading, Adeline passed as much of the day as possible. From books, indeed, she had constantly derived her chief information and amusement: those belonging to La Motte were few, but well chosen; and Adeline could find pleasure in reading them more than once. When her mind was discomposed by the behaviour of Madame La Motte, or by a retrospection of her early misfortunes, a book was the opiate that lulled it to repose. La Motte had several of the best English poets, a language which Adeline had learned in the convent; their beauties, therefore, she was capable of tasting, and they often inspired her with enthusiastic delight.

At the decline of day she quitted her chamber to enjoy the sweet evening hour, but strayed no farther than an avenue
near

near the abbey, which fronted the west. She read a little, but, finding it impossible any longer to abstract her attention from the scene around, she closed the book, and yielded to the sweet complacent melancholy which the hour inspired. The air was still, the sun, sinking below the distant hills, spread a purple glow over the landscape, and touched the forest glades with softer light. A dewy freshness was diffused upon the air. As the sun descended, and the dusk came silently on, the scene assumed a solemn grandeur. As she mused, she recollected and repeated the following stanzas :

N I G H T.

Now Ev'ning fades! her pensive step retires,
 And night leads on the dews, and shadowy hours :
 Her awful pomp of planetary fires,
 And all her train of visionary powers.

THESE paint with fleeting shapes the dream of sleep,
 THESE swell the waking soul with pleasing dread ;
 These through the glooms in forms terrific sweep,
 And rouse the thrilling horrors of the dead !

Queen

Queen of the solemn thought—mysterious Night !
 Whose step is darkness, and whose voice is fear !
 Thy shades I welcome with severe delight,
 And hail thy hollow gales, that sigh so drear !

When, wrapt in clouds, and riding in the blast,
 Thou roll'st the storm along the sounding shore,
 I love to watch the whelming billows, cast
 On rocks below, and listen to the roar.

Thy milder terrors, Night, I frequent woo,
 Thy silent lightnings, and thy meteor's glare,
 Thy northern fires, bright with ensanguine hue,
 That light in heaven's high vault the fervid air.

But chief I love thee, when thy lucid car
 Sheds through the fleecy clouds a trembling gleam,
 And shews the misty mountain from afar,
 The nearer forest, and the valley's stream :

And nameless objects in the vale below,
 That, floating dimly, to the musing eye
 Assume, at Fancy's touch, fantastic shew,
 And raise her sweet romantic visions high.

[Then, let me stand amid thy glooms profound
 On some wild woody steep, and hear the breeze
 That swells in mournful melody around,
 And faintly dies upon the distant trees.

What melancholy charm steals o'er the mind !
 What hallow'd tears the rising rapture greet !
 While many a viewless spirit in the wind
 Sighs to the lonely hour in accent sweet !

. Ah !

Ah! who the dear illusions pleas'd would yield,
Which Fancy wakes from silence and from shades,
For all the sober forms of Truth reveal'd,
For all the scenes that Day's bright eye pervades!

On her return to the abbey she was joined by Louis, who, after some conversation, said, " I am much grieved
" by the scene to which I was witness
" this morning, and have longed for an
" opportunity of telling you so. My
" mother's behaviour is too mysterious
" for me to account for, but it is not
" difficult to perceive she labours under
" some mistake. What I have to request
" is, that whenever I can be of service
" to you, you will command me."

Adeline thanked him for his friendly offer, which she felt more sensibly than she chose to express. " I am unconscious," said she, " of any offence
" that may have deserved Madame La
" Motte's displeasure, and am, therefore, totally unable to account for it.
" I have repeatedly sought an explanation,
" tion,

" tion, which she has as anxiously
 " avoided; it is better, therefore, to
 " press the subject no farther. At the
 " same time, Sir, suffer me to assure
 " you, I have a just sense of your good-
 " ness." Louis sighed, and was silent.—
 At length, " I wish you would permit
 " me," resumed he, " to speak with
 " my mother upon this subject. I am
 " sure I could convince her of her
 " error."

" By no means," replied Adeline;
 " Madame La Motte's displeasure has
 " given me inexpressible concern; but
 " to compel her to an explanation, would
 " only increase this displeasure, instead
 " of removing it. Let me beg of you
 " not to attempt it."

" I submit to your judgement," said
 Louis; " but, for once, it is with re-
 " luctance; I should esteem myself most
 " happy, if I could be of service to you."
 He spoke this with an accent so tender
 that Adeline, for the first time, per-
 ceived

ceived the sentiments of his heart. A mind more fraught with vanity than her's, would have taught her long ago to regard the attentions of Louis as the result of something more than well-bred gallantry. She did not appear to notice his last words, but remained silent, and involuntarily quickened her pace. Louis said no more, but seemed sunk in thought; and this silence remained uninterrupted, till they entered the abbey.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

"Hence, horrible shadow!
 "Unreal mockery, hence!"

MACBETH.

NEAR a month elapsed without any remarkable occurrence: the melancholy of La Motte suffered little abatement; and the behaviour of Madame to Adeline, though somewhat softened, was still far from kind. Louis, by numberless little attentions, testified his growing affection for Adeline, who continued to treat them as passing civilities.

It happened, one stormy night, as they were preparing for rest, that they were alarmed by the trampling of horses near the abbey. The sound of several voices succeeded, and a loud knocking at the great gate of the hall soon after confirmed

confirmed the alarm. La Motte had little doubt that the officers of justice had at length discovered his retreat, and the perturbation of fear almost confounded his senses; he, however, ordered the lights to be extinguished, and a profound silence to be observed, unwilling to neglect even the slightest possibility of security. There was a chance, he thought, that the persons might suppose the place uninhabited, and believe they had mistaken the object of their search. His orders were scarcely obeyed, when the knocking was renewed, and with increased violence. La Motte now repaired to a small grated window in the portal of the gate, that he might observe the number and appearance of the strangers.

The darkness of the night baffled his purpose; he could only perceive a group of men on horseback; but, listening attentively, he distinguished a part of their discourse. Several of the
men

men contended, that they had mistaken the place; till a person, who, from his authoritative voice, appeared to be their leader, affirmed, that the lights had issued from this spot, and he was positive there were persons within. Having said this, he again knocked loudly at the gate, and was answered only by hollow echoes. La Motte's heart trembled at the sound, and he was unable to move.

After waiting some time, the strangers seemed as if in consultation, but their discourse was conducted in such a low tone of voice, that La Motte was unable to distinguish its purport. They withdrew from the gate, as if to depart, but he presently thought he heard them amongst the trees on the other side of the fabric, and soon became convinced they had not left the abbey. A few minutes held La Motte in a state of torturing suspense; he quitted the grate, where Louis now stationed himself, for that part
of

of the edifice which overlooked the spot where he supposed them to be waiting.

The storm was now loud, and the hollow blasts, which rushed among the trees, prevented his distinguishing any other sound. Once, in a pause of the wind, he thought he heard voices; but he was not long left to conjecture, for the renewed knocking at the gate again appalled him; and, regardless of the terrors of Madame La Motte and Adeline, he ran to try his last chance of concealment, by means of the trap-door.

Soon after, the violence of the assailants seeming to increase with every gust of the tempest, the gate, which was old and decayed, burst from its hinges, and admitted them to the hall. At the moment of their entrance, a scream from Madame La Motte, who stood at the door of an adjoining apartment, confirmed the suspicion of the principal stranger, who continued to advance, as fast as the darkness would permit him.

Adeline had fainted, and Madame La Motte was calling loudly for assistance, when Peter entered with lights, and discovered the hall filled with men, and his young mistress senseless upon the floor. A Chevalier now advanced, and soliciting pardon of Madame for the rudeness of his conduct, was attempting an apology, when, perceiving Adeline, he hastened to raise her from the ground; but Louis, who now returned, caught her in his arms, and desired the stranger not to interfere.

The person to whom he spoke this, wore the star of one of the first orders in France, and had an air of dignity, which declared him to be of superior rank. He appeared to be about forty, but, perhaps, the spirit and fire of his countenance made the impression of time upon his features less perceptible. His softened aspect and insinuating manners, while, regardless of himself, he seemed attentive only to the condition of Adeline, gradually

gradually dissipated the apprehensions of Madame La Motte, and subdued the sudden resentment of Louis. Upon Adeline, who was yet insensible, he gazed with an eager admiration, which seemed to absorb all the faculties of his mind. She was, indeed, an object not to be contemplated with indifference.

Her beauty, touched with the languid delicacy of illness, gained from sentiment what it lost in bloom. The negligence of her dress, loosened for the purpose of freer respiration, discovered the graces which her auburn tresses, that fell in profusion over her bosom, shaded, but could not conceal.

There now entered another stranger, a young Chevalier, who, having spoken hastily to the elder, joined the general group that surrounded Adeline. He was of a person, in which elegance was happily blended with strength, and had a countenance animated, but not haughty; noble, yet expressive of peculiar

sweetness. What rendered it at present most interesting, was the compassion he seemed to feel for Adeline, who now revived and saw him, the first object that met her eyes, bending over her in silent anxiety.

On perceiving him, a blush of quick surprize passed over her cheek, for she knew him to be the stranger she had seen in the forest. Her countenance instantly changed to the paleness of terror, when she observed the room crowded with people. Louis now supported her into another apartment, where the two Chevaliers, who followed her, again apologized for the alarm they had occasioned. The elder, turning to Madam La Motte, said, "You are, no doubt, Madam, ignorant that I am the proprietor of this abbey." She started. "Be not alarmed, Madam, you are safe and welcome. This ruinous spot has been long abandoned by me, and if it has afforded you a shelter, I am happy."

Madame

Madame La Motte expressed her gratitude for this condescension, and Louis declared his sense of the politeness of the Marquis de Montalt, for that was the title of the noble stranger.

“ My chief residence,” said the Marquis, “ is in a distant province, but I
 “ have a chateau near the borders of the
 “ forest, and in returning from an excursion, I have been benighted and
 “ lost my way. A light, which gleamed
 “ through the trees, attracted me hither,
 “ and such was the darkness without,
 “ that I did not know it proceeded from
 “ the abbey till I came to the door.”

The noble deportment of the strangers, the splendour of their apparel, and, above all, this speech, dissipated every remaining doubt of Madame's, and she was giving orders for refreshment to be set before them, when La Motte, who had listened, and was now convinced he had nothing to fear, entered the apartment.

He advanced towards the Marquis with a complacent air, but, as he would have spoke, the words of welcome faltered on his lips, his limbs trembled, and a ghastly paleness overspread his countenance. The Marquis was little less agitated, and in the first moment of surprise, put his hand upon his sword, but, recollecting himself, he withdrew it, and endeavoured to obtain a command of features. A pause of agonizing silence ensued. La Motte made some motion towards the door, but his agitated frame refused to support him, and he sunk into a chair, silent and exhausted. The horror of his countenance, together with his whole behaviour, excited the utmost surprise in Madame, whose eyes inquired of the Marquis more than he thought proper to answer: his looks increased, instead of explaining the mystery, and expressed a mixture of emotions, which she could not analyse. Meanwhile, she endeavoured to soothe
and

and revive her husband, but he repressed her efforts, and, averting his face, covered it with his hands.

The Marquis, seeming to recover his presence of mind, stepped to the door of the hall where his people were assembled, when La Motte, starting from his seat, with a frantic air, called on him to return. The Marquis looked back and stopped, but still hesitated whether to proceed; the supplications of Adeline, who was now returned, added to those of La Motte, determined him, and he sat down. "I request of you, my Lord," said La Motte, "that we may converse for a few moments by ourselves."

"The request is bold, and the indulgence, perhaps, dangerous," said the Marquis: "it is more also than I will grant. You can have nothing to say, with which your family are not acquainted—speak your purpose and be brief." La Motte's complexion varied to every sentence of his speech.

“Impossible ! my Lord,” said he ; “ my
 “ lips shall close for ever, ere they pro-
 “ nounce before another human being
 “ the words reserved for you alone. I
 “ entreat—I supplicate of you a few mo-
 “ ments private discourse.” As he pro-
 nounced these words, tears swelled into
 his eyes, and the Marquis, softened by
 his distress, consented, though with evi-
 dent emotion and reluctance, to his re-
 quest.

La Motte took a light and led the
 Marquis to a small room in a remote part
 of the edifice, where they remained near
 an hour. Madame, alarmed by the
 length of their absence, went in quest of
 them : as she drew near, a curiosity, in
 such circumstances, perhaps, not unjusti-
 fiable, prompted her to listen. La Motte
 just then exclaimed—“ The phrenzy of
 “ despair !”—Some words followed, de-
 livered in a low tone, which she could
 not understand.—“ I have suffered more
 “ than I can express,” continued he ; “ the
 “ same

“ same image has pursued me in my
 “ midnight dream, and in my daily wan-
 “ derings. There is no punishment,
 “ short of death, which I would not have
 “ endured, to regain the state of mind
 “ with which I entered this forest. I
 “ again address myself to your com-
 “ passion.”

A loud gust of wind, that burst along
 the passage where Madame La Motte
 stood, overpowered his voice and that of
 the Marquis, who spoke in reply : but she
 soon after distinguished these words—
 “ To-morrow, my Lord, if you return
 “ to these ruins, I will lead you to the
 “ spot.”

“ That is scarcely necessary, and may be
 “ dangerous,” said the Marquis. “ From
 “ you, my Lord, I can excuse these
 “ doubts,” resumed La Motte ; “ but I
 “ will swear whatever you shall propose.
 “ Yes,” continued he, “ whatever may
 “ be the consequence, I will swear to
 “ submit to your decree !” The rising

tempest again drowned the sound of their voices, and Madame La Motte vainly endeavoured to hear those words, upon which, probably, hung the explanation of this mysterious conduct. They now moved towards the door, and she retreated with precipitation to the apartment where she had left Adeline, with Louis and the young Chevalier.

Hither the Marquis and La Motte soon followed; the first haughty and cool, the latter somewhat more composed than before, though the impression of horror was not yet faded from his countenance. The Marquis passed on to the hall where his retinue awaited: the storm had not yet subsided, but he seemed impatient to be gone, and ordered his people to be in readiness. La Motte observed a sullen silence, frequently pacing the room with hasty steps, and was sometimes lost in reverie. Meanwhile, the Marquis, seating himself by Adeline, directed to her his whole attention, except
when

when sudden fits of absence came over his mind and suspended him in silence: at these times the young Chevalier addressed Adeline, who, with diffidence and some agitation, shrunk from the observance of both.

The Marquis had been near two hours at the abbey, and the tempest still continuing, Madame La Motte offered him a bed. A look from her husband made her tremble for the consequence. Her offer was, however, politely declined, the Marquis being evidently as impatient to be gone, as his tenant appeared distressed by his presence. He often returned to the hall, and from the gates raised a look of impatience to the clouds. Nothing was to be seen through the darkness of night—nothing heard but the howling of the storm.

The morning dawned before he departed. As he was preparing to leave the abbey, La Motte again drew him aside, and held him for a few moments

in close conversation. His impassioned gestures, which Madame La Motte observed from a remote part of the room, added to her curiosity a degree of wild apprehension, derived from the obscurity of the subject. Her endeavour to distinguish the corresponding words, was baffled by the low voice in which they were uttered.

The Marquis and his retinue at length departed, and La Motte, having himself fastened the broken gates, silently and dejectedly withdrew to his chamber. The moment they were alone, Madame seized the opportunity of entreating her husband to explain the scene she had witnessed. "Ask me no questions," said La Motte, sternly, "for I will answer none. I have already forbade your speaking to me on this subject."

"What subject?" said his wife. La Motte seemed to recollect himself.—
"No matter—I was mistaken—I thought
"you

“ you had repeated these questions before.”

“ Ah!” said Madame La Motte, “ it is then as I suspected ; your former melancholy, and the distress of this night, have the same cause.”

“ And why should you either suspect or inquire ? Am I always to be persecuted with conjectures ?”

“ Pardon me, I meant not to persecute you ; but my anxiety for your welfare will not suffer me to rest under this dreadful uncertainty. Let me claim the privilege of a wife, and share the affliction which oppresses you. Deny me not.”—La Motte interrupted her, “ Whatever may be the cause of the emotions which you have witnessed, I swear that I will not now reveal it. A time may come, when I shall no longer judge concealment necessary ; till then be silent, and desist from importunity ; above all, forbear to remark to any one what you may have seen
“ uncom-

“uncommon in me. Bury your surmise
 “in your own bosom, as you would avoid
 “my curse and my destruction.” The
 determined air with which he spoke this,
 while his countenance was overspread
 with a livid hue, made his wife shudder;
 and she forbore all reply.

Madame la Motte retired to bed, but
 not to rest. She ruminated on the past
 occurrence; and her surprize and curi-
 osity, concerning the words and beha-
 viour of her husband, were but more
 strongly stimulated by reflection. One
 truth, however, appeared; she could not
 doubt, but the mysterious conduct of La
 Motte, which had for so many months
 oppressed her with anxiety, and the late
 scene with the Marquis, originated from
 the same cause. This belief, which
 seemed to prove how unjustly she had
 suspected Adeline, brought with it a
 pang of self-accusation. She looked for-
 ward to the morrow, which would lead
 the Marquis again to the abbey, with
 impa-

impatience. Wearied nature at length resumed her rights, and yielded a short oblivion of care.

At a late hour, the next day, the family assembled to breakfast. Each individual of the party appeared silent and abstracted, but very different was the aspect of their features, and still more the complexion of their thoughts. La Motte seemed agitated by impatient fear, yet the fullness of despair overspread his countenance. A certain wildness in his eye at times expressed the sudden start of horror, and again his features would sink into the gloom of despondence.

Madame La Motte seemed harassed with anxiety; she watched every turn of her husband's countenance, and impatiently awaited the arrival of the Marquis. Louis was composed and thoughtful. Adeline seemed to feel her full share of uneasiness. She had observed the behaviour of La Motte on the preceding night with much surprize, and the
happy

happy confidence she had hitherto reposed in him was shaken. She feared, also, lest the exigency of his circumstances should precipitate him again into the world, and that he would be either unable or unwilling to afford her a shelter beneath his roof.

During breakfast La Motte frequently rose to the window, from whence he cast many an anxious look. His wife understood too well the cause of his impatience, and endeavoured to repress her own. In these intervals Louis attempted by whispers to obtain some information from his father, but La Motte always returned to the table, where the presence of Adeline prevented farther discourse.

After breakfast, as he walked upon the lawn, Louis would have joined him, but La Motte peremptorily declared he intended to be alone, and soon after, the Marquis being not yet arrived, proceeded to a greater distance from the abbey.

Adeline

Adeline retired into their usual working-room with Madame La Motte, who affected an air of cheerfulness, and even of kindness. Feeling the necessity of offering some reason for the striking agitation of La Motte, and of preventing the surprize which the unexpected appearance of the Marquis would occasion Adeline, if she was left to connect it with his behaviour of the preceding night, she mentioned that the Marquis and La Motte had long been known to each other, and that this unexpected meeting, after an absence of many years, and under circumstances so altered and humiliating, on the part of the latter, had occasioned him much painful emotion. This had been heightened by a consciousness that the Marquis had formerly misinterpreted some circumstances in his conduct towards him, which had caused a suspension of their intimacy.

This account did not bring conviction to the mind of Adeline, for it seemed
inadequate

inadequate to the degree of emotion, the Marquis and La Motte had mutually betrayed. Her surprize was excited, and her curiosity awakened by the words which were meant to delude them both, but she forbore to express her thoughts.

Madame, proceeding with her plan, said, "The Marquis was now expected, and she hoped whatever differences remained, would be perfectly adjusted." Adeline blushed, and endeavouring to reply, her lips faltered. Conscious of this agitation, and of the observance of Madame La Motte, her confusion increased, and her endeavours to suppress served only to heighten it. Still she tried to renew the discourse, and still she found it impossible to collect her thoughts. Shocked lest Madame should apprehend the sentiment, which had till this moment been concealed almost from herself, her colour fled, she fixed her eyes on the ground, and, for some time, found it difficult to respire. Madame La Motte

Motte inquired if she was ill, when Adeline, glad of the excuse, withdrew to the indulgence of her own thoughts, which were now wholly engrossed by the expectation of seeing again the young Chevalier, who had accompanied the Marquis.

As she looked from her room, she saw the Marquis on horseback, with several attendants, advancing at a distance, and she hastened to apprize Madame La Motte of his approach. In a short time he arrived at the gates, and Madame and Louis went out to receive him, La Motte being not yet returned. He entered the hall, followed by the young Chevalier, and accosting Madame with a sort of stately politeness, inquired for La Motte, whom Louis now went to seek.

The Marquis remained for a few minutes silent, and then asked of Madame La Motte, "how her fair daughter did?" Madame understood it was Adeline he meant,

meant, and having answered his inquiry, and slightly said that she was not related to her, Adeline, upon some indication of the Marquis's wish, was sent for: she entered the room with a modest blush and a timid air, which seemed to engage all his attention. His compliments she received with a sweet grace, but, when the younger Chevalier approached, the warmth of his manner rendered her's involuntarily more reserved, and she scarcely dared to raise her eyes from the ground, lest they should encounter his.

La Motte now entered and apologized for his absence, which the Marquis noticed only by a slight inclination of his head, expressing at the same time by his looks, both distrust and pride. They immediately quitted the abbey together, and the Marquis beckoned his attendants to follow at a distance. La Motte forbade his son to accompany him, but Louis observed he took the way into the thickest

thickest part of the forest. He was lost in a chaos of conjecture concerning this affair, but curiosity and anxiety for his father induced him to follow at some distance.

In the mean time the young stranger, whom the Marquis had addressed by the name of Theodore, remained at the abbey with Madame La Motte and Adeline. The former, with all her address, could not conceal her agitation during this interval. She moved involuntarily to the door whenever she heard a footstep, and several times she went to the hall door, in order to look into the forest, but as often returned, checked by disappointment. No person appeared. Theodore seemed to address as much of his attention to Adeline, as politeness would allow him to withdraw from Madame La Motte. His manners so gentle, yet dignified, insensibly subdued her timidity, and banished her reserve. Her conversation no longer suffered a painful

ful

ful constraint, but gradually disclosed the beauties of her mind, and seemed to produce a mutual confidence. A similarity of sentiment soon appeared, and Theodore, by the impatient pleasure which animated his countenance, seemed frequently to anticipate the thoughts of Adeline.

To them the absence of the Marquis was short, though long to Madame La Motte, whose countenance brightened, when she heard the trampling of horses at the gate.

The Marquis appeared but for a moment, and passed on with La Motte to a private room, where they remained for some time in conference, immediately after which he departed. Theodore took leave of Adeline, who, as well as La Motte and Madame, attended them to the gate, with an expression of tender regret, and often, as he went, looked back upon the abbey, till the intervening branches

branches entirely excluded it from his view.

The transient glow of pleasure diffused over the cheek of Adeline disappeared with the young stranger, and she sighed as she turned into the hall. The image of Theodore pursued her to her chamber; she recollected with exactness every particular of his late conversation—his sentiments so congenial with her own—his manners so engaging—his countenance so animated—so ingenuous and so noble, in which manly dignity was blended with the sweetness of benevolence:—These, and every other grace, she recollected, and a soft melancholy stole upon her heart. “I shall see him no more,” said she. A sigh, that followed, told her more of her heart than she wished to know. She blushed, and sighed again, and then, suddenly recollecting herself, she endeavoured to divert her thoughts to a different subject. La Motte’s connection with the Marquis for some time engaged

engaged her attention, but, unable to develope the mystery that attended it, she sought a refuge from her own reflections in the more pleasing ones to be derived from books.

During this time, Louis, shocked and surprized at the extreme distress which his father had manifested upon the first appearance of the Marquis, addressed him on the subject. He had no doubt that the Marquis was intimately concerned in the event which made it necessary for La Motte to leave Paris, and he spoke his thoughts without disguise, lamenting at the same time the unlucky chance which had brought him to seek refuge in a place, of all others, the least capable of affording it—the estate of his enemy. La Motte did not contradict this opinion of his son's, and joined in lamenting the evil fate which had conducted him thither.

The term of Louis's absence from his regiment was now nearly expired, and
he

he took occasion to express his sorrow, that he must soon be obliged to leave his father in circumstances so dangerous as the present. "I should leave you, Sir, with less pain," continued he, "was I sure I knew the full extent of your misfortunes. At present I am left to conjecture evils, which, perhaps, do not exist. Relieve me, Sir, from this state of painful uncertainty, and suffer me to prove myself worthy of your confidence."

"I have already answered you on this subject," said La Motte, "and forbade you to renew it. I am now obliged to tell you, I care not how soon you depart, if I am to be persecuted with these inquiries." La Motte walked abruptly away, and left his son to doubt and concern.

The arrival of the Marquis had dissipated the jealous fears of Madame La Motte, and she awoke to a sense of her cruelty towards Adeline. When she

considered her orphan state—the uniform affection which had appeared in her behaviour—the mildness and patience with which she had borne her injurious treatment, she was shocked, and took an early opportunity of renewing her former kindness. But she could not explain this seeming inconsistency of conduct, without betraying her late suspicions, which she now blushed to remember, nor could she apologize for her former behaviour, without giving this explanation.

She contented herself, therefore, with expressing in her manner the regard which was thus revived. Adeline was at first surprized, but she felt too much pleasure at the change to be scrupulous in inquiring its cause.

But notwithstanding the satisfaction which Adeline received from the revival of Madame La Motte's kindness, her thoughts frequently recurred to the peculiar and forlorn circumstances of her condition.

condition. She could not help feeling less confidence than she had formerly done in the friendship of Madame La Motte, whose character now appeared less amiable than her imagination had represented it, and seemed strongly tainted with caprice. Her thoughts often dwelt upon the strange introduction of the Marquis at the abbey, and on the mutual emotions and apparent dislike of La Motte and himself; and, under these circumstances, it equally excited her surprise that La Motte should chuse, and that the Marquis should permit him, to remain in his territory.

Her mind returned the oftener, perhaps, to this subject, because it was connected with Theodore; but it returned unconscious of the idea which attracted it. She attributed the interest she felt in the affair to her anxiety for the welfare of La Motte, and for her own future destination, which was now so deeply involved in his. Sometimes, indeed, she

caught herself busy in conjecture as to the degree of relationship in which Theodore stood to the Marquis, but she immediately checked her thoughts, and severely blamed herself for having suffered them to stray to an object, which she perceived was too dangerous to her peace.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

“ Present ills

“ Are less than horrible imaginings.”

JULIUS CÆSAR.

A Few days after the occurrence related in the preceding chapter, as Adeline sat alone in her chamber, she was roused from a reverie by a trampling of horses near the gate, and, on looking from the casement, she saw the Marquis de Montalt enter the abbey. This circumstance surprized her, and an emotion, whose cause she did not trouble herself to inquire for, made her instantly retreat from the window. The same cause, however, led her thither again as hastily, but the object of her search did not appear, and she was in no haste to retire.

As she stood musing and disappointed, the Marquis came out with La Motte,

L 3

and,

and, immediately looking up, saw Adeline and bowed. She returned his compliment respectfully, and withdrew from the window, vexed at having been seen there. They went into the forest, but the Marquis's attendants did not, as before, follow them thither. When they returned, which was not till after a considerable time, the Marquis immediately mounted his horse and rode away.

For the remainder of the day La Motte appeared gloomy and silent, and was frequently lost in thought. Adeline observed him with particular attention and concern; she perceived that he was always more melancholy after an interview with the Marquis, and was now surprized to hear that the latter had appointed to dine the next day at the abbey.

When La Motte mentioned this, he added some high eulogium on the character of the Marquis, and particularly praised his generosity and nobleness of soul. At this instant Adeline recollected

lected the anecdotes she had formerly heard concerning the abbey, and they threw a shadow over the brightness of that excellence; which La Motte now celebrated. The account, however, did not appear to deserve much credit; a part of it, as far as a negative will admit of demonstration, having been already proved false; for it had been reported, that the abbey was haunted, and no supernatural appearance have ever been observed by the present inhabitants.

Adeline, however, ventured to inquire, whether it was the present Marquis of whom those injurious reports had been raised? La Motte answered her with a smile of ridicule: "Stories of
 "ghosts and hobgoblins have always
 "been admired and cherished by the
 "vulgar," said he. "I am inclined to
 "rely upon my own experience, at least,
 "as much as upon the accounts of these
 "peasants. If you have seen any thing
 "to corroborate these accounts, pray

“inform me of it, that I may establish
“my faith.”

“You mistake me, Sir,” said she,
“it was not concerning supernatural
“agency that I would inquire; I allu-
“ded to a different part of the report,
“which hinted, that some person had
“been confined here, by order of the
“Marquis, who was said to have died
“unfairly. This was alledged as a rea-
“son for the Marquis’s having aban-
“doned the abbey.”

“All the mere coinage of idleness,”
said La Motte; “a romantic tale to ex-
“cite wonder: to see the Marquis is
“alone sufficient to refute this; and if
“we credit half the number of those sto-
“ries that spring from the same source,
“we prove ourselves little superior to
“the simpletons who invent them. Your
“good sense, Adeline, I think, will teach
“you the merit of disbelief.”

Adeline blushed and was silent; but
La Motte’s defence of the Marquis ap-
peared

peared much warmer, and more diffuse, than was consistent with his own disposition, or required by the occasion. His former conversation with Louis occurred to her, and she was the more surprized at what passed at present.

She looked forward to the morrow with a mixture of pain and pleasure; the expectation of seeing again the young Chevalier occupying her thoughts, and agitating them with a various emotion; now she feared his presence, and now she doubted whether he would come. At length she observed this, and blushed to find how much he engaged her attention. The morrow arrived.—The Marquis came—but he came alone; and the sun shine of Adeline's mind was clouded, though she was able to wear her usual air of cheerfulness. The Marquis was polite, affable, and attentive: to manners the most easy and elegant, was added the last refinement of polished life. His conversation was lively, amusing, some-

times even witty; and discovered great knowledge of the world; or, what is often mistaken for it, an acquaintance with the higher circles, and with the topics of the day.

Here La Motte was also qualified to converse with him, and they entered into a discussion of the characters and manners of the age with great spirit and some humour. Madame La Motte had not seen her husband so cheerful since they left Paris, and sometimes she could almost fancy she was there. Adeline listened, till the cheerfulness which she had at first only assumed, became real. The address of the Marquis was so insinuating and affable, that her reserve insensibly gave way before it, and her natural vivacity resumed its long lost empire.

At parting, the Marquis told La Motte he rejoiced at having found so agreeable a neighbour. La Motte bowed. "I shall sometime visit you," continued he,

he, “ and I lament that I cannot at present invite Madame La Motte and her fair friend to my chateau, but it is undergoing some repairs, which make it but an uncomfortable residence.”

The vivacity of La Motte disappeared with his guest, and he soon relapsed into fits of silence and abstraction. “ The Marquis is a very agreeable man,” said Madame La Motte.—“ Very agreeable,” replied he.—“ And seems to have an excellent heart,” she resumed.—“ An excellent one,” said La Motte.

“ You seem discomposed, my dear; what has disturbed you?”

“ Not in the least—I was only thinking, that, with such agreeable talents, and such an excellent heart, it was a pity the Marquis should——”

“ What, my dear?” said Madame with impatience. “ That the Marquis should—should suffer this abbey to fall into ruins,” replied La Motte.

“Is that all!” said Madame with disappointment.—“That is all, upon my honour,” said La Motte, and left the room.

Adeline’s spirits, no longer supported by the animated conversation of the Marquis, sunk into languor, and when he departed, she walked pensively into the forest. She followed a little romantic path that wound along the margin of the stream, and was overhung with deep shades. The tranquillity of the scene, which autumn now touched with her sweetest tints, softened her mind to a tender kind of melancholy, and she suffered a tear, which, she knew not wherefore, had stolen into her eye, to tremble there unchecked. She came to a little lonely recess, formed by high trees; the wind sighed mournfully among the branches, and as it waved their lofty heads scattered their leaves to the ground. She seated herself on a bank beneath, and indulged the melancholy

choly reflections that pressed to her mind.

“ O ! could I dive into futurity and
 “ behold the events which await me ! ”
 said she : “ I should, perhaps, by con-
 “ stant contemplation, be enabled to
 “ meet them with fortitude. An orphan
 “ in this wide world—thrown upon the
 “ friendship of strangers for comfort,
 “ and upon their bounty for the very
 “ means of existence, what but evil have
 “ I to expect ! Alas, my father ! how
 “ could you thus abandon your child—
 “ how leave her to the storms of life—
 “ to sink, perhaps, beneath them ?—
 “ Alas, I have no friend ! ”

She was interrupted by a rustling among the fallen leaves ; she turned her head, and, perceiving the Marquis’s young friend, arose to depart. “ Par-
 “ don this intrusion,” said he, “ your
 “ voice attracted me hither, and your
 “ words detained me : my offence, how-
 “ ever, brings with it its own punishment,
 “ having

“ having learned your sorrows—how can
 “ I help feeling them myself? Would
 “ that my sympathy, or my suffering,
 “ could rescue you from them!”—He
 hesitated—“ Would that I could deserve
 “ the title of your friend, and be thought
 “ worthy of it by yourself!”

The confusion of Adeline’s thoughts
 would scarcely permit her to reply; she
 trembled, and gently withdrew her hand,
 which he had taken while he spoke.
 “ You have, perhaps, heard, Sir, more
 “ than is true: I am, indeed, not happy,
 “ but a moment of dejection has made
 “ me unjust, and I am less unfortunate
 “ than I have represented. When I said
 “ I had no friend, I was ungrateful to
 “ the kindness of Monsieur and Madame
 “ La Motte, who have been more than
 “ friends—have been as parents to me.”

“ If so, I honour them,” cried Theodore with warmth; “ and if I did not
 “ feel it to be presumption, I would ask
 “ why you are unhappy?—But—” He
 paused.

paused. Adeline, raising her eyes, saw him gazing upon her with intense and eager anxiety, and her looks were again fixed upon the ground. "I have pained
 " you," said Theodore, " by an im-
 " proper request. Can you forgive me,
 " and also when I add, that it was an in-
 " terest in your welfare, which urged
 " my inquiry ? "

" Forgiveness, Sir, it is unnecessary
 " to ask. I am certainly obliged by the
 " compassion you express. But the
 " evening is cold, if you please, we will
 " walk towards the abbey." As they
 moved on, Theodore was for some
 time silent. At length, " It was but
 " lately that I solicited your pardon,"
 said he, " and I shall now, perhaps,
 " have need of it again ; but you will do
 " me the justice to believe, that I have
 " a strong, and indeed a pressing reason,
 " to inquire how nearly you are related
 " to Monsieur La Motte."

" We

“ We are not at all related,” said Adeline; “ but the service he has done me I can never repay, and I hope my gratitude will teach me never to forget it.”

“ Indeed!” said Theodore surprized: “ and may I ask how long you have known him?”

“ Rather, Sir, let me ask, why these questions should be necessary?”

“ You are just,” said he, with an air of self-condemnation, “ my conduct has deserved this reproof; I should have been more explicit.” He looked as if his mind was labouring with something which he was unwilling to express. “ But you know not how delicately I am circumstanced,” continued he, “ yet I will aver, that my questions are prompted by the tenderest interest in your happiness—and even by my fears for your safety.”—Adeline started.—“ I fear you are deceived,” said he, “ I fear there’s danger near you.”

Adeline

Adeline stopped, and, looking earnestly at him, begged he would explain himself. She suspected that some mischief threatened La Motte; and Theodore continuing silent, she repeated her request. “ If La Motte is concerned in
 “ this danger,” said she, “ let me en-
 “ treat you to acquaint him with it im-
 “ mediately. He has but too many
 “ misfortunes to apprehend.”

“ Excellent Adeline !” cried Theodore; “ that heart must be adamant that
 “ would injure you. How shall I hint
 “ what I fear is too true, and how for-
 “ bear to warn you of your danger, with-
 “ out—” He was interrupted by a step among the trees, and presently after saw La Motte cross into the path they were in. Adeline felt confused at being thus seen with the Chevalier, and was hastening to join La Motte, but Theodore detained her, and entreated a moment’s attention. “ There is now no
 “ time to explain myself,” said he;
 “ yet

“ yet what I would say is of the utmost
 “ consequence to *yourself*.

“ Promise, therefore, to meet me in
 “ some part of the forest at about this
 “ time to-morrow evening, you will
 “ then, I hope, be convinced that my
 “ conduct is directed, neither by com-
 “ mon circumstances, nor common re-
 “ gard.” Adeline shuddered at the idea
 of making an appointment; she hesi-
 tated, and at length entreated Theo-
 dore not to delay till to-morrow an ex-
 planation which appeared to be so im-
 portant, but to follow La Motte and
 inform him of his danger immediately.
 “ It is not with La Motte I would speak,”
 replied Theodore; “ I know of no dan-
 “ ger that threatens him—but he ap-
 “ proaches; be quick, lovely Adeline,
 “ and promise to meet me.”

“ I do promise,” said Adeline, in a
 faltering voice; “ I will come to the
 “ spot where you found me this evening,
 “ an hour earlier to-morrow.” Saying
 this,

this, she withdrew her trembling hand which Theodore had pressed to his lips, in token of acknowledgement, and he immediately disappeared.

La Motte now approached Adeline, who, fearing that he had seen Theodore, was in some confusion. "Whither is Louis gone so fast?" said La Motte. She rejoiced to find his mistake, and suffered him to remain in it. They walked pensively towards the abbey, where Adeline, too much occupied by her own thoughts to bear company, retired to her chamber. She ruminated upon the words of Theodore, and the more she considered them, the more she was perplexed. Sometimes she blamed herself for having made an appointment, doubting whether he had not solicited it for the purpose of pleading a passion; and now delicacy checked this thought, and made her vexed that she had presumed upon having inspired one. She recollected the serious earnestness of his voice and manner,

manner, when he entreated her to meet him; and as they convinced her of the importance of the subject, she shuddered at a danger, which she could not comprehend, looking forward to the morrow with anxious impatience.

Sometimes, too, a remembrance of the tender interest he had expressed for her welfare, and of his correspondent look and air, would steal across her memory, awakening a pleasing emotion and a latent hope that she was not indifferent to him. From reflections like these she was roused by a summons to supper: the repast was a melancholy one, it being the last evening of Louis's stay at the abbey. Adeline, who esteemed him, regretted his departure, while his eyes were often bent on her, with a look which seemed to express that he was about to leave the object of his affection. She endeavoured, by her cheerfulness, to re-animate the whole party, and especially Madame La Motte, who frequently shed tears.

“ We

“We shall soon meet again,” said Adeline, “I trust, in happier circumstances.” La Motte sighed. The countenance of Louis brightened at her words. “Do you wish it?” said he, with peculiar emphasis. “Most certainly I do,” she replied. “Can you doubt my regard for my best friends?”

“I cannot doubt any thing that is good of you,” said he.

“You forget you have left Paris,” said La Motte to his son, while a faint smile crossed his face, “such a compliment would there be in character with the place—in these solitary woods it is quite *outrè*.”

“The language of admiration is not always that of compliment, Sir,” said Louis. Adeline, willing to change the discourse, asked to what part of France he was going. He replied, that his regiment was now at Peronne, and he should go immediately thither. After some mention of indifferent subjects, the family

mily withdrew for the night to their several chambers.

The approaching departure of her son occupied the thoughts of Madame La Motte, and she appeared at breakfast with eyes swollen with weeping. The pale countenance of Louis seemed to indicate that he had rested no better than his mother. When breakfast was over, Adeline retired for a while, that she might not interrupt, by her presence, their last conversation. As she walked on the lawn before the abbey she returned in thought to the occurrence of yesterday evening, and her impatience for the appointed interview increased. She was soon joined by Louis. "It was unkind
 " of you to leave us," said he, "in the
 " last moments of my stay. Could I hope
 " that you would sometimes remember
 " me, when I am far away, I should
 " depart with less sorrow." He then expressed his concern at leaving her, and, though he had hitherto armed himself

self with resolution to forbear a direct avowal of an attachment which must be fruitless, his heart now yielded to the force of passion, and he told what Adeline every moment feared to hear.

“ This declaration,” said Adeline, endeavouring to overcome the agitation it excited, “ gives me inexpressible concern.”

“ O, say not so !” interrupted Louis, “ but give me some slender hope to support me in the miseries of absence. Say that you do not hate me—Say—”

“ That I do most readily say,” replied Adeline, in a tremulous voice ; “ if it will give you pleasure to be assured of my esteem and friendship—receive this assurance :—as the son of my best benefactors, you are entitled to——”

“ Name not benefits,” said Louis, “ your merits outrun them all; and suffer me to hope for a sentiment less cool than that of friendship, as well as to believe that I do not owe your appro-
bation

“ bation of me to the actions of others.
 “ I have long borne my passion in silence,
 “ because I foresaw the difficulties that
 “ would attend it, nay, I have even
 “ dared to endeavour to overcome it: I
 “ have dared to believe it possible, for-
 “ give the supposition, that I could for-
 “ get you—and——”

“ You distress me,” interrupted Ade-
 line; “ this is a conversation which I
 “ ought not to hear. I am above dis-
 “ guise, and, therefore, assure you,
 “ that, though your virtues will always
 “ command my esteem, you have no-
 “ thing to hope from my love. Were
 “ it even otherwise, our circumstances
 “ would effectually decide for us. If
 “ you are really my friend, you will re-
 “ joice that I am spared the struggle
 “ between affection and prudence. Let
 “ me hope also, that time will teach you
 “ to reduce love within the limits of
 “ friendship.”

“ Never!”

“Never!” cried Louis vehemently;
 “Were this possible, my passion would
 “be unworthy of its object.” While
 he spoke, Adeline’s favourite fawn came
 bounding towards her. This circum-
 stance affected Louis even to tears.—
 “This little animal,” said he, after a
 short pause, “first conducted me to you;
 “it was witness to that happy moment
 “when I first saw you, surrounded by at-
 “tractions too powerful for my heart;
 “that moment is now fresh in my me-
 “mory, and the creature comes even to
 “witness this sad one of my departure.”
 Grief interrupted his utterance.

When he recovered his voice, he said,
 “Adeline! when you look upon your
 “little favourite and caress it, remember
 “the unhappy Louis, who will then be
 “far, far from you. Do not deny me
 “the poor consolation of believing
 “this!”

“I shall not require such a monitor,”
 said Adeline with a smile; “your excel-

“lent parents and your own merits have
 “sufficient claim upon my remembrance.
 “Could I see your natural good sense
 “resume its influence over passion, my
 “satisfaction would equal my esteem for
 “you.”

“Do not hope,” said Louis, “nor
 “will I wish it—for passion here is vir-
 “tue.” As he spoke, he saw La Motte
 turn round an angle of the abbey. “The
 “moments are precious,” said he, “I
 “am interrupted. O! Adeline, fare-
 “well! and say that you will sometimes
 “think of me.”

“Farewel,” said Adeline, who was
 affected by his distress—“farewel!
 “and peace attend you. I will think of
 “you with the affection of a sister.”—
 He sighed deeply, and pressed her hand;
 when La Motte, winding round another
 projection of the ruin, again appeared.
 Adeline left them together, and with-
 drew to her chamber, oppressed by the
 scene. Louis’s passion and her esteem
 were

were too sincere not to inspire her with a strong degree of pity for his unhappy attachment. She remained in her chamber till he had quitted the abbey, unwilling to subject him or herself to the pain of a formal parting.

As evening and the hour of appointment drew nigh, Adeline's impatience increased; yet, when the time arrived, her resolution failed, and she faltered from her purpose. There was something of indelicacy and dissimulation in an *appointed* interview, on her part, that shocked her. She recollected the tenderness of Theodore's manner, and several little circumstances which seemed to indicate that his heart was not unconcerned in the event. Again she was inclined to doubt whether he had not obtained her consent to this meeting upon some groundless suspicion; and she almost determined not to go: yet it was possible Theodore's assertion might be sincere, and her danger real; the chance of this made her de-

licate scruples appear ridiculous; she wondered that she had for a moment suffered them to weigh against so serious an interest, and, blaming herself for the delay they had occasioned, hastened to the place of appointment.

The little path, which led to this spot, was silent and solitary, and when she reached the recess, Theodore had not arrived. A transient pride made her unwilling he should find that she was more punctual to his appointment than himself; and she turned from the recess into a track, which wound among the trees to the right. Having walked some way, without seeing any person, or hearing a footstep, she returned; but he was not come, and she again left the place. A second time she came back, and Theodore was still absent. Recollecting the time at which she had quitted the abbey, she grew uneasy, and calculated that the hour appointed was now much exceeded. She was offended and perplexed:
but

but she seated herself on the turf, and was resolved to wait the event. After remaining here till the fall of twilight in fruitless expectation, her pride became more alarmed; she feared that he had discovered something of the partiality he had inspired, and believing that he now treated her with purposed neglect, she quitted the place with disgust and self-accusation.

When these emotions subsided, and reason resumed its influence, she blushed for what she termed this childish effervescence of self-love. She recollected, as if for the first time, these words of Theodore: “ I fear you are deceived, and that some danger is near you.” Her judgement now acquitted the offender, and she saw only the friend. The import of these words, whose truth she no longer doubted, again alarmed her. Why did he trouble himself to come from the chateau, on purpose to hint her danger, if he did not wish to preserve her? And if

he wished to preserve her, what but necessity could have withheld him from the appointment.

These reflections decided her at once. She resolved to repair on the following day at the same hour to the recess, whether the interest, which she believed him to take in her fate, would no doubt conduct him in the hope of meeting her. That some evil hovered over her she could not disbelieve, but what it might be, she was unable to guess. Monsieur and Madame La Motte were her friends, and who else, removed, as she now thought herself, beyond the reach of her father, could injure her? But why did Theodore say she was deceived? She found it impossible to extricate herself from the labyrinth of conjecture, but endeavoured to command her anxiety till the following evening. In the mean time she engaged herself in efforts to amuse Madame La Motte, who required some relief, after the departure of her son.

Thus

Thus oppressed by her own cares, and interested by those of Madame La Motte, Adeline retired to rest. She soon lost her recollection, but it was only to fall into harassed slumbers, such as but too often haunt the couch of the unhappy. At length her perturbed fancy suggested the following dream.

She thought she was in a large old chamber belonging to the abbey, more ancient and desolate, though in part furnished, than any she had yet seen. It was strongly barricadoed, yet no person appeared. While she stood musing and surveying the apartment, she heard a low voice call her, and, looking towards the place whence it came, she perceived by the dim light of a lamp a figure stretched on a bed that lay on the floor. The voice called again, and approaching the bed, she distinctly saw the features of a man who appeared to be dying. A ghastly paleness overspread his countenance, yet there was an expression of mild-

mildness and dignity in it, which strongly interested her.

While she looked on him his features changed, and seemed convulsed in the agonies of death. The spectacle shocked her, and she started back, but he suddenly stretched forth his hand, and seizing her's, grasped it with violence: she struggled in terror to disengage herself, and again looking on his face, saw a man, who appeared to be about thirty, with the same features, but in full health, and of a most benign countenance. He smiled tenderly upon her and moved his lips, as if to speak, when the floor of the chamber suddenly opened and he sunk from her view. The effort she made to save herself from following awoke her. This dream had so strongly impressed her fancy, that it was some time before she could overcome the terror it occasioned, or even be perfectly convinced she was in her own apartment. At length,

length, however, she composed herself to sleep; again she fell into a dream.

She thought she was bewildered in some winding passages of the abbey, that it was almost dark, and that she wandered about a considerable time, without being able to find a door. Suddenly she heard a bell toll from above, and soon after a confusion of distant voices. She redoubled her efforts to extricate herself. Presently all was still, and, at length, wearied with the search, she sat down on a step that crossed the passage. She had not been long here, when she saw a light glimmer at a distance on the walls, but a turn in the passage, which was very long, prevented her seeing from what it proceeded. It continued to glimmer faintly for some time, and then grew stronger, when she saw a man enter the passage, habited in a long black cloak, like those usually worn by attendants at funerals, and bearing a torch. He called to her to follow him,
and

and led her through a long passage to the foot of a staircase. Here she feared to proceed, and was running back, when the man suddenly turned to pursue her, and, with the terror which this occasioned, she awoke.

Shocked by these visions, and more so by their seeming connection, which now struck her, she endeavoured to continue awake, lest their terrific images should again haunt her mind: after some time, however, her harassed spirits again sunk into slumber, though not to repose.

She now thought herself in a large old gallery, and saw at one end of it a chamber-door standing a little open, and a light within: she went towards it, and perceived the man she had before seen, standing at the door, and beckoning her towards him. With the inconsistency so common in dreams, she no longer endeavoured to avoid him, but advancing, followed him into a suite of very ancient
apart-

apartments, hung with black, and lighted up as if for a funeral. Still he led her on, till she found herself in the same chamber she remembered to have seen in her former dream: a coffin, covered with a pall, stood at the farther end of the room; some lights, and several persons surrounded it, who appeared to be in great distress.

Suddenly, she thought, these persons were all gone, and that she was left alone; that she went up to the coffin, and while she gazed upon it, she heard a voice speak, as if from within, but saw nobody. The man she had before seen, soon after stood by the coffin, and lifting the pall, she saw beneath it a dead person, whom she thought to be the dying Chevalier she had seen in her former dream: his features were sunk in death, but they were yet serene. While she looked at him, a stream of blood gushed from his side, and descending to the floor, the whole chamber was overflowed;

ed; at the same time some words were uttered in the voice she heard before; but the horror of the scene so entirely overcame her, that she started and awoke.

When she had recovered her recollection, she raised herself in the bed, to be convinced it was a dream she had witnessed, and the agitation of her spirits were so great, that she feared to be alone, and almost determined to call Annette. The features of the deceased person, and the chamber where he lay, were strongly impressed upon her memory, and she still thought she heard the voice, and saw the countenance which her dream represented. The longer she considered these dreams, the more she was surprized: they were so very terrible, returned so often, and seemed to be so connected with each other, that she could scarcely think them accidental; yet, why they should be supernatural, she could not tell. She slept no more that night.

END OF VOL. I.



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